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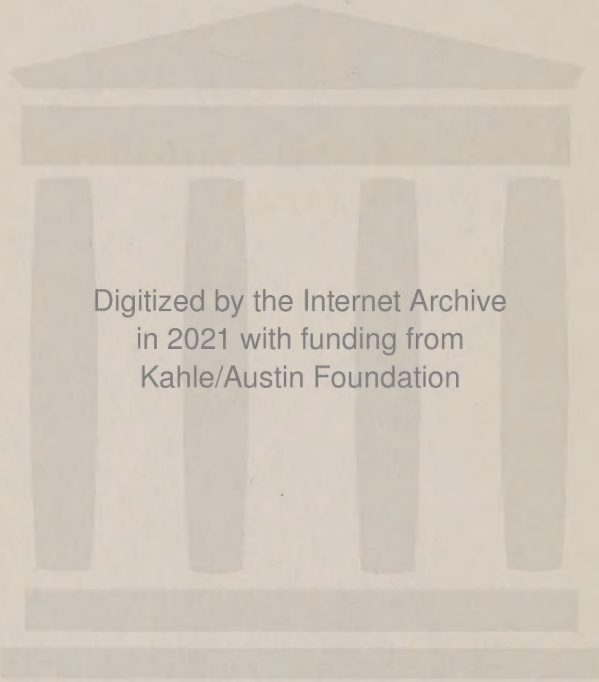


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**BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISTS
IN JAPAN**

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BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISTS IN JAPAN

BY

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PREFACE

This volume is the fifth to appear of the series on the "World's Living Religions," projected in 1920 by a Committee of the Board of Missionary Preparation in North America and intended to furnish accurate and trustworthy, though brief and popular presentations of the actual religious life of each great region of the non-Christian world. It purposes to give to students of religion in the West, and particularly to young missionaries who are planning to go to the Far East, a vivid idea of the religious conditions which exist in Japan and some understanding of the hold of Buddhism upon those who follow it.

In a true sense, the volume seeks to enable the reader to think in terms of a devotee of Buddhism in Japan, to appreciate his point of view with some sympathy, and thus be enabled to consider his religious problems helpfully. The whole series aims to be impressionistic, seeking, in this volume, to afford a clear picture of Buddhism as it works out in its normal setting in the Japanese Empire, with its practices, beliefs and adjustments. For a thoroughly scientific discussion of Buddhism in general and of Japanese Buddhism in detail, there are many available authorities which are referred to in the Appendix.

Buddhism had a thousand years of history before it reached Japan, and it has had about fourteen hundred years of interesting history there. It has developed along with Japan, the religion profoundly affecting the country and people, while these in turn influenced the religion. The outcome has been a Buddhism which differs quite essentially from the type prevailing to-day in Ceylon, Burma, Siam and French Indo-China, and likewise from

the type prevailing in China and Korea, each of which has been represented in volumes of this series already published. Japanese Buddhism, therefore, may be roughly regarded as representing the last and highest stages of a very long and highly varied development.

Buddhism is not, however, and never has been the sole religion of Japan. It has always been closely connected with Shinto and Confucianism and has been affected by them. A Japanese takes his ethics from Confucius and a multitude of his customs from Shinto. The statement is nevertheless true that throughout most of Japan's real history, and to a considerable degree as an important factor in it, Buddhism has been the dominant and in many ways the distinctive religion of the Japanese people, a vehicle and spur of Japanese culture, civilization and nationality. Notwithstanding a decadence from its former lofty estate, Buddhism in Japan is developing a highly educated priesthood and has a vitality to-day which must be reckoned with.

The writer of this volume has been for many years a resident of Japan, a student of things Japanese and of Japan's religious literature, and an intimate companion of competent Japanese scholars. He has given himself assiduously to the study of the religious thought and history of Japan. In 1912 he published a study of the conditions in Japan just before the Meiji era, entitled *Just Before the Dawn*, which was really a survey of the times of Ninomiya Sontoku, one of the famous teachers of modern Japan. In 1914, through the University of Toronto, he published an important volume of studies in Japanese Confucianism, entitled *Light from the East*. In 1920 he published *Progress in the Mikado's Empire*, a book for young people. In the present volume he has sought to keep close to the explanations of Japanese customs and religious ideas which representative Japanese accept, without arguing their validity in the world of scholarship. For these he is almost entirely indebted to Japanese writers

and teachers. He would like to acknowledge his indebtedness to the many who have given him valuable assistance in collecting materials.

Japanese Buddhism, as expounded by some of its devotees, has a specious likeness to Christianity which is very puzzling to a novice; and yet, as a distinguished interpreter of both Buddhism and Christianity has said, they "differ in the answers they make to the problems of life and in atmosphere." To become able to distinguish clearly between the two expressions of religious philosophy, ethics and life with assurance and yet with fairness demands patient and long-continued study. It is the hope of the editors, however, that this little volume, in connection with the two volumes on Buddhism which have preceded it, will serve to initiate and in some degree to guide that process to which every student of Far Eastern conditions should set himself.

THE EDITORS.

February, 1927.

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BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISTS
IN JAPAN

BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISTS IN JAPAN

I

INTRODUCTORY

"I am very prosperous," said the Emperor Nintoku (313-399 A. D.), as he looked over the beautiful plains of ancient Japan after three years of benevolent effort and care for his people during a period of special economic stress; "I am indeed prosperous!" "How can you say that you are prosperous when your palace roof is leaking and the plaster is falling from the walls?" said a retainer who overheard the remark. The Emperor replied: "When you see smoke rising in the land you know that the people's fires are busy. The prosperity of my people is indeed my prosperity." This oft-repeated remark is typical of the attitude of the great rulers of Japan toward their people, especially during the first imperialistic period, when they ruled the land as a father would rule his home. The distinguished rulers of Japan, even in those early days, displayed fatherly care for their people, promoting their welfare, and, like the late Emperor Meiji, took pleasure in introducing them to a new and progressive civilization. This characteristic of the sovereigns of Japan had much to do with the introduction of Buddhism. Those who brought the new religion from the mainland of Asia first of all gained the approval of the sovereigns and their immediate attendants. They deliberately adjusted their message to the national demands of the leaders and statesmen of the time. They made such immediate contributions to the still rather primitive civilization of the coun-

try, they added in so many ways to its resources and its happiness, they helped so signally to create a real nationality out of the various subject groups who gave allegiance to the Emperor, that the historian can with difficulty imagine what would have been the development of Japan had Buddhism never entered the country. The impact of Buddhism educated the people, broadened their ideas, developed their resources and laid deep foundations for the remarkable future of the nation. Professor Chamberlain in *Things Japanese* declares: "All education was for centuries in Buddhist hands, as was the care of the poor and sick. Buddhism introduced art and medicine, molded the folklore of the country, created its dramatic and intellectual activities. In a word, Buddha was the teacher under whose instruction the Japanese nation grew up." No doubt, Buddhism succeeded in those early centuries in covering every phase of life. The late Professor Gessho Sasaki has said: "The soul of the culture of the Orient and that of Japan is Buddhism; the sutras of the religion are without doubt the essence of the body of the culture."

On the other hand, Buddhism in Japan has been greatly influenced by the national and racial characteristics of the Japanese people. The Japanese people are never mere imitators; they possess what one of their scholars has described as "additive originality," the power not only of assimilating an outside culture, but also of creating something distinctively their own. Just as Confucianism in Japan, as it developed in the Tokugawa age under the influence of Shinto, was different from that produced in China, so Buddhism in Japan is not merely a reproduction of that in China, Korea or India, but has developed indigenous sects, resulting in a religious influence and a philosophical insight which, at least in the judgment of Japanese scholars, has truly surpassed that which was introduced into Japan originally.

Any attempt to describe Buddhism as it is to-day in Japan must of necessity reveal it to be a religious system

which cannot be harmonized with modern science or with the latest developments in philosophy. Even Japanese scholars point out the necessity of such a revolution in Buddhism as will remove its animal and idol worship, its superstitious traditions, its Indian pessimism, and effect other essential changes, if it is to retain the respect of so progressive a people as the Japanese have proved themselves to be. Nevertheless, Japanese Buddhism, as it has been reorganized and purified by contact with modern conditions, is manifesting a vitality, and producing an educated priesthood, which must command the respect and consideration of all who would understand Buddhism as it is.

II

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BUDDHISM AS THE LEADING RELIGION OF JAPAN

I. *The Gaining of Royal Favor*

For nearly fourteen centuries Buddhism has had a place of importance and influence in Japan. According to tradition it was first introduced from Southern Korea in the sixth century of the Christian era.¹ A Korean prince, the ruler of the state of Kudara, who was a Buddhist, sent as a token of respect and homage to the reigning emperor of Japan a golden image of Buddha, some Buddhist scriptures and some works of art, together with a message which eulogized the religion which they represented, recommending it as one which would bring "happiness and good fortune" to Japan, declaring also that it was a charm which would "open to man all the treasures he may desire." The gifts were accepted by the emperor and given into the charge of Soga, the leader of the liberal party at the court of that day, who was inclined to try out the new cult. Soga set up the image with every manifestation of respect in his own palace, which became a Buddhist temple, and thus initiated the new worship in Japan. The message also was given serious consideration by the sovereign and his court.

But many looked askance upon the new religion as

¹ It is probable that Buddhism was being introduced by immigrants from Korea at a much earlier date than is usually stated, even, perhaps, as early as the second century. The Emperor is said to have found a Buddhist symbol on the seashore. See Ashton's *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 219. The usual dates given are 545 A. D. or 552 A. D. (*ibid.*, Vol. II, p. xxviii).

something foreign and alien to the Japanese people. A strong conservative party, who feared the anger of the ancient gods of Japan if the people should be disloyal, developed an earnest opposition. Before Buddhism became generally accepted, it went through a long and severe struggle with these leaders and with the great masses of the people who were naturally swayed by old-time superstitions. Immediately after Soga had enshrined the image of Buddha in his palace an epidemic broke out all over Japan. The people generally ascribed this calamity to the honors paid to the foreign god, and the conservative leaders tried to expel both advocates and image by force. The liberal forces, however, rallied to the defense of the new religion with equal determination, until after decades of conflict, in 587, led by the imperial prince, Shotoku Taishi, they were able to overcome the opposition of the conservatives, whose leaders had largely perished.

The contest was an unequal one. The inflow of a well-developed civilization quietly and permanently supplanted the simple culture and primitive nature worship of early Shinto. Although ancient Shinto was a polytheistic nature worship, centering largely in the worship of heroes and ancestors, especially imperial ancestors, nevertheless the emperors and rulers themselves, from the seventh to the ninth centuries, welcomed the new culture with open arms, and not only became saintly devotees of the foreign religion, but were powerful promoters of foreign culture. On the other hand, the greatest Buddhist leaders wisely identified their religion with all the best elements in Japanese tradition and appropriated to themselves all the good qualities of Shinto and of Confucianism. This combination made a great contribution to that sense of reverence, loyalty and courage which has been manifested in the intense patriotism of the Japanese samurai, especially as it developed in the unwritten chivalry of the Japanese, familiarly known as Bushido.

A permanent place was attained for Buddhism when the imperial family became actual and ardent converts. The Crown Prince, Shotoku Taishi, and his imperial aunt, the Empress Suiko (593-628 A. D.), became zealous Buddhists, whereupon the new religion was both protected and promoted. The prince, who had been made by his aunt the real ruler of Japan, spared no pains to introduce into his country more and more of the civilization which had been developed in China. He established a constitution, the second article of which read: "Reverence sincerely the three treasures, Buddha, the Law and the priesthood, for these are the final refuge of the four generative beings and the supreme object of faith in all countries. What man in what age can fail to revere this Law. . . . If they turn not to the three treasures, wherewithal shall their crookedness be made straight." (Brinkley, *A History of the Japanese People*, p. 140.)

Through the influence of these imperial converts Buddhism became fairly well established. Many of the customs and forms of worship which are cherished in Japan to-day were introduced under their patronage. The popular festival held on the birthday of Buddha and the festival for the dead were first celebrated in 606 A. D. The Prince himself established the custom, which is quite characteristic of Buddhism in Japan, of giving to laymen a place of prominence in religious affairs. He himself conducted special lectures on the Buddhist scriptures at the imperial palace. The Empress encouraged the Buddhist habit of showing mercy for all living creatures by substituting a party to gather medicinal herbs for the poor and needy in place of a hunting party. Under such eager imperial patronage, Buddhism became strongly established among the leading classes in Japan. At the same time the masses, to whom the religious philosophy of Buddhism meant little, had reason to appreciate the spirit of kindness thus popularized. When Prince Shotoku Taishi died, he was ranked as a saint and invoked as the very incarnation of

the Goddess of Mercy. "The old wept as though they had lost their beloved child; the young as if they had lost a fond parent; the farmer ceased from his plow, and the pounding woman laid aside her pestle." The people said: "The sun and moon have lost their brightness; heaven and earth have crumbled to ruin; henceforth in whom shall we put our trust?"² In Korea the death of the Imperial Prince was commemorated by his former teacher, Eji, who said: "Surely in the Prince, Buddha has lived again."

2. *The Upbuilding of Japanese Civilization*

During the next two hundred years Buddhism became deeply identified with the national life of Japan under the patronage of the imperial rulers and of their leading statesmen. The Emperor Kotoku (645-654) went so far as to reject Shinto altogether, cutting down its groves of sacred trees and destroying its beautiful shrines. Buddhist services were held in the imperial palace itself and in the offices of state at provincial capitals. Special religious gatherings, not unlike modern summer schools, were held for the reading of the scriptures and for the promotion of meditation. To show his complete loyalty to his faith the Emperor granted amnesty to prisoners, set free six hundred slaves, encouraged acts of mercy, and even went so far as to forbid his people to fish or hunt. The Empress Jito (687-696) set a white swallow free as a symbol of her desire to express a spirit of mercy. On a certain day each province held special ceremonies at which some living animals were set free as a similar token. This explains the prevailing custom at Buddhist funerals to-day of setting caged birds free to symbolize the merciful spirit of the deceased.

Many stories have come down from this era relating the effectiveness of prayer to Buddha in times of sickness or famine by those who truly possessed this spirit of mercy. One story found in the *Nihongi* tells of Shinto

² See *Nihongi*, Ashton's translation, Vol. II, p. 148.

leaders in a time of great drought who sacrificed horses and cattle before their gods, beseeching them for rain, and of the Buddhist priests who decorated the images of the Buddha, read the scriptures continuously, and called, without result, for public repentance and prayer; until at last the Empress Kōkyoku (642-645) prayed with her face turned to heaven, whereupon rain fell in abundance for days.

During these years Buddhism gradually established its hold upon the masses in Japan. Temples were built everywhere and the sacred books were made available to all the people. Small Buddha shelves or shrines were established in the homes of the people, so that Buddhism was given a real place in family life. Mystic influences and protective values came to be ascribed to these shrines and to the customs built around them. Thus at a date when imperialism and the papacy were just beginning to test their strength in Europe in a certain hostility and rivalry, the imperial family and the Buddhist hierarchy in Japan united their efforts for the good of the common people. In Japan, as in Europe, ecclesiasticism really triumphed, since the Emperor Shōmu (742-749) was willing to bow in submission to the "three treasures." His consort, the Empress Kōmyō, became famed for her piety and devotion. She built a charity hospital and devoted her energy to the needs of women and children, of widows and diseased persons. She is even represented as having sucked the poison from the sores of the Buddha himself, who appeared to her in the guise of a loathsome leper.

The popular following which Buddhism gained was not, of course, due to its intellectual impression. To the masses the distinctions embodied in the many sects were quite unintelligible. But the outward glory of a religion which presented a magnificent ritual, an imposing temple, gorgeous processions, richly clothed priests, waving banners, mystic mutterings, incense, bells, chants and pray-

ers, and which promised a future life of happiness and the service of learned and potent magicians, as they were viewed by the devotees,—these elements made Buddhism popular.

The culmination of this long period of religious development was commemorated by the erection of a huge bronze image of the Buddha at Nara, the ancient capital of Japan. The image represents the Buddha in a sitting posture. It is fifty-five and a half feet high, the face alone measuring sixteen feet in length. On either side of the image two bronze attendants, each thirty feet high, stand ready to do his bidding. The order for the erection of this image was given by the Emperor Shomu in recognition of the peace which the country enjoyed through the "influence and authority of Buddha." In that order the Emperor declared his ability, power and right to erect the image, and his hope that all would coöperate with him spontaneously and willingly. He said: "Those who help in this great work should have pure hearts, performing their tasks so as to bring joy to all." Voluntary assistance was welcomed; even a contribution of grass or earth was appreciated, but "no official shall be allowed to extort money from the people for this great work." It required nearly five hundred tons of copper to make the body, and seven hundred and fifty pounds of refined gold. The work was brought to a conclusion through the earnest prayers of the Emperor and his people. In response to an imperial order to pray for the gold necessary to finish the image, gold was found in Mitsu province, so that the image was completed in 752, in the reign of the Empress Koken, the daughter of the Emperor Shomu.

Tradition says that the Empress Koken was an incarnation of the Goddess of Mercy. She took as deep an interest in the completion of the image as her father had taken; she even stooped and with her own hands handed copper to the workmen. On the celebration of Buddha's

⁸ Brinkley, *History*, p. 193.

birthday she and all the officials of state assisted in the ceremony of pouring sacred tea over the head of the great image. Later, during the ceremony of "opening the eyes" or unveiling the great image, she led the procession in which all civil and military officials took part. The most distinguished figure among them was the high priest who came from India to preside over the festivities. Buddhism was now supreme in Japan. When completed the temple over the great image was endowed with taxes from five thousand houses and ten thousand *cho*⁴ of land; a great bell, thirteen and a half feet high and weighing four tons, was placed in the court. An imperial order stated that the imperial line should respect this temple, because the prosperity of Japan depended upon it: "Let him who violates this command perish in the depths of Hell." The Buddhist conquest of Japan now seemed complete.

The Emperor was well aware that there was still a strong conservative party which worshiped the tutelary gods of Japan, and which would be prejudiced against any attempt to favor the foreign religion at the expense of Shinto. To overcome this prejudice he sent Gyoki, a famous priest, to consult the ancestral goddess at Ise. Gyoki was very popular with the common people, so much so that in his early days he had been cast into prison as a dangerous man. While he moved about among the people, repeating Buddhist scriptures and prayers, he sympathized in a practical way with all their interests, built irrigation ponds, bridges, roads and harbors, gave special help to the poor and needy, and provided hot baths for the people. He is even credited with opening a free dispensary and with introducing the potter's wheel. Hence, when he returned from Ise and reported that on the seventh day of his religious devotion before the national shrine the great door had opened and the national god had declared in a loud voice: "The true form or reality of Buddhism is the sun that shines to clear away the long

⁴ One *cho* is 2.45 acres.

night of birth and death; it is the moon that melts away the dark clouds of human passion; your request is as a favorable opportunity to me; it is as if a ship for which I had been waiting had arrived," the people were convinced that the great Sun Goddess of Japan and the Buddha from India were the same. This conclusion was strengthened when the Emperor announced that it had also been revealed to him in a dream.

3. *The Absorption of Shinto*

Shortly after the capital of Japan had been moved to Kyoto in 794, two famous priests returned from China and helped to complete the virtual absorption of Shinto. One of them, Dengyo Daishi (767-802), went to the summit of the wooded Mount Hiei near Kyoto, where he built a little hut and began his solitary religious devotions. It was his purpose to introduce some new elements into the Buddhism of Japan and to found a new sect, but, fearing the conservative party, he was very cautious in his methods. One beautiful moonlight night, wrapt in deep meditation, he received an inspiration. He reported that he had seen three lights which on closer scrutiny he recognized as S'akyamuni, the Buddha, Yakushi, the god of medicine, and Amida, the god of measureless light and life. When he inquired their names they ordered him to draw the Chinese characters for "mountain kings," the names of the Shinto gods of the mountain. As he expounded this vision he interpreted it to mean not only that the Buddhist and Shinto deities were identical, but also that a new sect should be established in Japan after the Chinese model.

The other priest, Kobo Daishi (774-835), had an even more clever device to convince the people that Buddhism was just the same as Shinto. He identified the Sun Goddess of the inner shrine at Ise (Ama-Terasu), "ruler of the plane of high heaven," with the material world (womb-stores-world) of his sect; and Kuni Toko Tachi

of the outer shrine at Ise with the spiritual world (diamond world) of the sect. These two worlds in its thinking are two parts of one reality. To realize the significance of this identification one need only recall the statement of the great Shinto scholar, Motoori Norinaga, who said: "Who has said such an absurd thing as that Kuni Toko Tachi is the god in the outer shrine? The god in the outer shrine is the female servant of the Sun Goddess."

By these and many other devices the leaders of Buddhism attempted to absorb the Shinto deities entirely into the Buddhist pantheon. The Shinto shrines were transformed into shrine-temple combinations. Even at the shrines at Ise during different periods prominent Buddhist deities were identified with the national gods as incarnations of them. For over a thousand years, until the revolution of 1868, this device retained a powerful influence over the people. At the time of the enthronement of the present emperor it was reported that the coronation ceremony, the greatest of all Shinto rites, had been in abeyance for over two centuries.

4. *Troubles and Struggles*

As Mohammed degenerated when his early struggles were over, and as abuses crept into the church at Rome after her sovereignty became supreme, so it was with Buddhism in Japan. Almost as soon as her political conquest of Japan had been accomplished Buddhism became the instrument for promoting the selfish ambitions of the powerful Fujiwara family, who played upon the piety of the Empress in order to induce the imperial family to abdicate its power and become Buddhist devotees. Tradition says that on the very night of the supreme triumph of Buddhism, when the imposing statue of the Buddha had been unveiled at Nara, the Empress retired to the home of her favorite, Nakamaro Fujiwara, whom she loved intensely. She bestowed on him vast wealth and gave him the resounding title of "the Conqueror." She

immediately retired from public responsibilities and became a nun. Later on, becoming enamored of the priest Dokyo, she forgot Nakamaro. Trouble arose at once between these two, each aspiring to leadership. The nominal emperor, Junin, her son (758-764), rather favored "the Conqueror," who attempted to assassinate Dokyo. The retired Empress raised an army which defeated and killed "the Conqueror" and caused the banishment of the Emperor to the lonely island of Awaji, where he died shortly afterward. The Empress then again ascended the throne as the Empress Shotoku (765-770). She made Dokyo her chief adviser and the pope of Buddhism with a palace as rich as her own. He went so far as to suggest that he should ascend the throne as her imperial consort. At first the Empress was inclined to consider the proposition favorably, but finally she sent Wake-no-Kiyomaro to consult the oracle at the imperial shrines. Attempts were made to bribe Kiyomaro to favor Dokyo's ambitions, but he brought back the following oracle: "From ancient times the imperial line has been unbroken; the emperor must be emperor, and the retainer must be a retainer; upon the death of the emperor, one of the imperial line must succeed him; self-seekers and profligates must be killed at once." Kiyomaro fled to the south to escape the angry priest who attempted to take his life. Soon afterward, however, the Empress died and was succeeded by the Emperor Konin. Kiyomaro was recalled by him to the court and from that time has been greatly honored by emperors and people alike. Dokyo, being a priest, was not put to death, but was banished by the Emperor and died in exile.

Notwithstanding the fate of "the Conqueror" the Fujiwara family came into control, and for nearly four centuries it shaped the destinies of the imperial family and governed Japan. Similarly, during the long period from the middle of the twelfth century through the governments of the Taira, Minamoto, Hojo and Ashikaga families, which ended in 1573, Japan was governed and all

her interests controlled by the "mailed fist" of her military rulers. Then there followed a period of internal struggle for power which culminated in the comparatively peaceful age of the Shogunate (1603-1868) of the Tokugawa family. During these ten centuries or more of steady military control of the people Buddhism degenerated. At times her priests, contrary to the teachings of Buddha, even put on armor and fought against rival sects and factions. Some significant revivals of religion, however, took place during this long period, leading to the development of special sects of devotees, of which more will be said in a subsequent chapter.

The outstanding characteristic of Buddhism in Japan has been the adaptation of its message to the national spirit and genius of the Japanese people. This has enabled Buddhism to make a unique contribution to the development of the religious life and the culture and ideals of the nation, a contribution which common gratitude demands shall be remembered. The close relation which Buddhism has had to the imperial family, the fact that members of the imperial family have entered her priesthood, as well as its share in giving greatness to the nation, have all contributed toward entrenching Buddhism in the lives and hearts of the Japanese people. If Buddhism has sufficient power and spirit left to throw off the abuses, the superstitions and the immoral teachings which have become a part of its system, there will be hope still of its revival; but this will necessitate a genuine revolution in its moral and social ideals to-day. Dr. Masaharu Anesaki, a distinguished representative of modern Buddhism, wrote in an article for the *Harvard Theological Review* for October, 1922, the following words "Buddhism as a body or as an aggregate of church organization is hopelessly degenerate and its clergy are utterly at a loss as to how to meet the perplexing situation presented on all sides. Yet its spiritual fountain is not without signs of a new outburst of geyser-like revival."

III

THE TEMPLES, SYMBOLS AND PRIESTS OF BUDDHISM

The true character and power of a religion can only be understood through a study of its relation and importance to the everyday life of the people. We must, therefore, turn to a consideration of Buddhism from the standpoint of the social and religious life of the common people in families and communities, as this centers round the temple and the priest.

I. *The Numerous Temples and Their Influence*

Imposing temples, with their many-storied towers or pagodas and with their statues of various kinds, are the treasure houses of ancient Japanese art, sculpture, architecture, literature, painting and music. They unfold the story—to one who can read it—of centuries of religious development. They are of perennial interest to the tourist, who glances at them, however, with relatively little understanding of their real importance. They endear Japan to the lover of national and religious traditions and ancient history. They are a vast treasure house of interest for the student of religion and anthropology. To the Buddhist devotee they inspire sentiments and awaken mystic experiences only to be understood by the initiated. Without her beautiful temples, Japan would be infinitely less attractive, even though in so many cases these temples have lost their past religious glory and have become little better than museums of art and culture.

Erected so often upon the summit of a mountain, surrounded by groves of evergreen trees and approached by long avenues lined with quaint stone lanterns, the temple

possesses a quiet beauty all its own. Everything about such a temple has some symbolic significance to the people. The bamboo trees represent longevity; the evergreens stand for fidelity; the plum trees, which blossom in late winter, suggest endurance; and these three grouped together form a most auspicious symbol and are often presented to brides or to one for whom the givers desire especial good fortune. There is always a pond full of sacred carp which is an unfailing source of interest to the spectators when the fish struggle for the food thrown to them by passers-by. The food for the fish is procured for a trifle from a little tea house or shop at the side of the pond. Sometimes food is placed on a little table with instructions for the visitor to drop a penny in the cash box and help himself to the desired food to throw to the fish. Great honesty is displayed in always exchanging the money for the food, though there may be no one in charge to insure such honesty. There are also hundreds of cooing doves fluttering about and seeking for food as the fishes do. There may be deer in the groves about the temple. It is the Buddhist teaching of mercy which prompts people to feed these creatures. To them it is distinctly a religious act. In other ponds one may see the exquisite lotus flower rising out of the dark mud; and in its season the sight of the iris delights the eye. In the moss-covered garden of the temple are many maples, and in the autumn days when these maples are resplendent in their myriad autumn tints, thousands of nature-loving Japanese throng the temple grounds to revel in their beauty. When nature supplies hills and valleys wooded with these maples the beauty of the autumnal scene is indescribable.

Some of these temples are over a thousand years old and consequently possess peculiar historic interest. From the reign of the Emperor Temmu (672-282) the government of Japan was accustomed to assist in the erection of temples, endowing them with rice fields which provided

for their upkeep. For many years ten of the largest and oldest of the temples, such as the Todaiji Temple at Nara, were granted support from the public treasury. Many temples have been honored as the abode of retired emperors or of priests of imperial blood, and still have special standing on that account. Certain Buddhist temples are still favored by the imperial family. However, they no longer receive support from the government, but the old prestige still clings to them, drawing great multitudes in pilgrimages. These imperial honors are pretty evenly distributed among the various sects.

The approach to a Buddhist temple is a large two-storied entrance with three gates, on either side of which stand the great images of the two Deva kings, gigantic guardians of the world, which serve to impress the ignorant worshiper with a sense of awe and mystery. One of the giant images has his mouth closed, as if saying the mystic syllable "Om," while the other has his mouth open, as if saying "Ah." These two are often said to represent the female and male principles, or the Indian gods, Indra and "the unborn Brahma." Worshipers as they enter often write a prayer on a bit of paper, chew the paper into a ball and throw it at these images. If the ball sticks, the prayer will be answered; but if it falls off there will be no answer. As a rule there are many of these balls sticking to the images, making them look quite repulsive. The gateway, always covered by an artistically curved, tiled roof, is quite impressive. Within the gates one enters a huge courtyard, within which are many buildings and objects of peculiar interest: a main hall or temple, the founder's hall, the pagoda, the revolving library, the priest's apartments, the guest halls, the bell tower and the drum tower.

On entering the main door of the temple proper one immediately finds himself standing before the gilded altar with its numerous ornaments and hangings. In the center, at the rear of the temple hall, stands an image of the

Buddha on what is called the "shumi stand," which represents the central mountain (*sumeru*) of all existence, the abode of Taishaku (Indra), the king of the three thousand worlds. Buddha, as the Absolute One, is placed on this central foundation. In the True Sect of the Pure Land (Jodo) this central position is given to the image of the founder, who is the head of the sect and one of the many kings in the three thousand worlds, and who is regarded as supreme in his own sphere. In any case, the symbolism is striking.

Many different kinds of candlesticks are to be seen in this main hall, conspicuous among which is the brass or bronze stork standing on the back of a tortoise. Such a candlestick was presented by Shinran to the Goddess of Mercy to commemorate his wedding, as a happy symbol of longevity and of the mercy of Amida. There is no more common or attractive pattern than the golden lotus leaves or flowers, symbolic of the spiritual enlightenment of the believer; for just as the beautiful flower grows up out of the dark mud, so may living beings rise into beautiful Buddhahood out of an existence of passion and sin. The incense burners are frequently decorated with a lion or dragon, after the pattern of the one said to have been carried by the Buddha when he was teaching. The lion, king of the animal world, is a suitable symbol of the Buddha who is feared by evil spirits. The dragon, associated with showers of rain, suggests showers of blessings. Even the canopy which hangs above the head of the officiating priest, and the sun hat worn by the priests when they go abroad, are of ancient origin. Tradition declares that once King Agasa saw the Buddha and his disciples walking in the sun, and sent a canopy and sun hats to protect the "blessed one" from the heat and dust. Another tradition declares that a king built a pagoda for his son who had become a Buddhist saint. When the pagoda fell into disrepair he ordered a canopy to be made and hung inside the pagoda. The merit of this act brought the king

great blessing for a hundred thousand years. Still another tradition relates that a simple shepherd gave the Buddha a sun hat to protect him from the fiery rays when he and his disciples were preaching. The merit of this act enabled the shepherd to be reborn either in paradise or in the world of men, where he would be very wealthy and be protected by a miraculous canopy, finally entering Buddhahood.

In the Shingon temples are wreaths of flowers made of metal. The scriptures say: "Those who follow Shingon teachings shall decorate the image of the Buddha with beautiful flowers, such as the lotus. . . . They must be such as are sought after, as flowers of happy omen." The use of wreaths made of precious metals is also endorsed by these scriptures. This custom is said to have come from India.

The Buddhist temple plays an important part in the everyday life of the people. A Japanese student once said to the author: "What you have said is very true; it reminds me of my childhood. My mother was an earnest Buddhist. When I was born she was at first unable to nourish me. She went to the temple to pray for help; the prayers of the priest were answered and I was nourished. She was grateful, and for three years while I was in the Middle School she took me very early every morning to the temple where I beat the drum while she prayed, "Hail to the Lotus of the Perfect Law."

2. *Household Buddha Shelf and Ancestral Tablets*

Important as these temples are, no study of Buddhism as a part of the life of the Japanese people would be complete without some reference to the use of the ancestral tablets which Buddhism in Japan has adopted from Confucianism. This ancestral worship, more than any other custom, binds the Japanese people to Buddhism. In the fourteenth year of Temmu's reign (686 A. D.) every family in Japan was instructed to set up the family shrine

containing an image of Buddha, copies of the sacred scriptures and tablets with the names of the family, whether living or dead. To distinguish between the significance of this as a token of respect for ancestors and as a definite worshiping of them is not easy. A modern business man, exhibiting his family shrine, once said: "There is a shrine similar to this in the temple. As the oldest member of my family, I am responsible to all the family connections for fulfilling the ceremonies connected with the shrine. I myself cannot break away from this responsibility and become a Christian; but I am willing that my children should do so if they wish." Some of his younger children did become excellent Christians, but the oldest son has remained loyal to the family traditions. This illustrates the manner in which Buddhism has assimilated ancestral worship and become related to the family system of Japan.

3. *The Use of Images in Worship*

"Without that spirit no man can succeed." Such were the words of Ninomiya Sontoku, pointing to the image of Fudō, the unmovable. The image of Fudō represents a man of stern countenance and set lips, standing unmoved in the midst of fire, with a sword in one hand to cut out evil and a rope in the other to bind it up. With Ninomiya we must agree that the unquenchable spirit of the old idol is one most excellent for any man to emulate. The ancient Samurai used sometimes to wear the image of Fudō on their armor as a symbol and incentive to valor and endurance. Frequently an image of Fudō will be seen at the foot of a deep waterfall. Here in midwinter earnest worshipers come, and, stripping their bodies to the waist, they stand under the falling water, clapping their hands and repeating their vows and prayers. One pilgrim upon being asked why he prayed in this fashion said that he had taken a vow to abstain from wine and women; another said that he was praying for a blessing to come to his sister. Such prayers are usually performed every

day in the coldest days of winter for a certain period of time, sometimes for three months.

In the great earthquake and fire of 1923 the principal temple to the Goddess of Mercy in Tokyo stood unharmed, greatly increasing the faith of the people in that historic image. For some time afterwards thousands thronged her courts daily to offer their thanks or to present their petitions. The masses were hungering for the consolation which faith in some divine power alone could give. The coffers of the temple were being enriched to an unprecedented degree. A large sum of money was received every day from the sale of fortunes at two sen each. Many artists found lucrative employment in making pictures of the goddess or in reproducing her image. Restaurants and tea houses in the neighborhood reaped a continual harvest from the throng of worshipers. The safety of the goddess was, of course, attributed to miraculous power. A man on a train was overheard to remark that the Asakusa goddess *must* have real power. Another man smilingly replied, however, "Yes, but she was surrounded by a park which no doubt protected her from the fire." As in the case of Fudō, the unmovable, the Goddess of Mercy symbolizes a very beautiful idea. Sometimes she is represented as a madonna, holding a child in her arms; most frequently her image has many faces looking in all directions with eyes searching everywhere for opportunities to do good, and with many hands outstretching on every side to help.

Many other symbolic images find an almost universal popularity. There are the seven gods of happiness, popular with business classes; Jizo, the guardian of children, everywhere popular, but especially among mothers; and Binsuru, the god of medicine, who is one of the sixteen saints surrounding the Buddha. He was expelled from that brotherhood for remarking on the beauty of a lovely woman, and hence his image is placed just outside the sacred altar. Sick people come by the thousands to rub

that part of his body which corresponds to the diseased part of their own, believing that it will effect a cure. Often his features, though made of bronze, are rubbed flat in this way. Inari, the god of cereals, whose messenger is the fox, is extremely popular among the farmers. The superstitions symbolized by these and other gods have a very strong hold upon the great mass of the Japanese people. There is little distinction made between Buddhist and Shinto emblems.

Buddhists, however, disclaim the imputation of idolatry. They take an attitude somewhat similar to that of the Roman Catholic toward the images and pictures of the saints. A Buddhist saint once explained that people need something to carry their minds to the invisible Buddha; it might be an old piece of wood or stone or bronze or anything else, so long as it serves the purpose of a symbol of the invisible. He went on to say: "What we are interested in is the real body of the living Buddha, which often becomes blurred in our minds because of our lack of attention; the image or picture is a reminder. Buddhism is not idolatrous; the scripture says: 'If a picture or an image of the Buddha is made after a man's death, so that he may be remembered and seen by the eye of the heart and the right idea of him formed; then it would be the same as if the incarnate Buddha (Tathagata) lived bodily among men.' " What is true of images is true also of all religious objects in Buddhism. They are highly symbolical, often in a helpful way. To make a distinction between helpful and harmful values is not always easy. These characteristics add to the interest of the study of Buddhism, a religion veiled in allegory and shrouded in mystery.

4. *The Priesthood*

The statement is often made, and with good reason, that the great majority of modern Buddhist priests, who have inherited their temples and to whom their service

represents a means of livelihood, do not really believe in their own religion. Without doubt this is true in a vast number of cases. Yet Buddhism retains a fair proportion of sincere and holy-minded scholars and saints. During the terrible days of conflagration in Tokyo after the earthquake in 1923, an incident occurred which reveals the spirit and devotion of the noblest of the priests of Buddhism. In Asakusa, when the abbot of the Hanzobo Temple, renowned for his age, his scholarship and his virtuous character, saw danger approaching his temple, he took his accustomed place before the image of the Buddha and began to pray that his temple might be saved. When the fire finally reached the temple, his neighbors, who respected him highly, rushed in through smoke and flame to beg of him to flee for his life, but he continued to pray with increasing zeal and in a louder voice than ever. When his friends who were obliged to leave him alone to meet his awful death were running away to a place of safety, they heard him cry: "O Lord Buddha, if thou dost not grant my prayer, it must be because I am not holy enough. Let me die in the flames to atone for my failure to save my good neighbors from thy wrath." This old abbot's sincere devotion warns us against too sweeping conclusions regarding any faith.

In the latter days of the Tokugawa family, Ninomiya Sontoku aptly compared the modern priest with those of ancient times. He said: "Ancient priests took their own bowls and obtained their own living by begging. They dressed in mean clothes and were content to live in mountain caves or in the quiet of the forest. But modern priests live in luxury, dress in costly robes and sit proudly in their magnificent temples, acting contrary to all the teachings of Buddha." This recalls the criticism of Pope Julius when Michelangelo had finished painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. He said: "Those dresses on your saints are such poor things, not rich enough—such very poor things." To which the artist replied, "Well, they

were poor things. The saints did not wear golden ornaments nor gold on their garments." The orthodox dress for a Buddhist priest was originally a patched garment, but to-day the idea is merely suggested by the use of a patched scarf of excellent quality. One tradition declares that on one occasion the Buddha sat in a cave near a certain city, wearing a garment marked off in squares like a rice field. The heavenly king, passing by, said to him: "The robes all Buddhas wore in the past were like the rice fields in appearance. In the future let your robes be made like them." A Buddhist writer says: "Just as the water in the rice fields nourishes good rice plants, so may the rice field pattern of the priest's robe nourish the three forms of goodness which minister to the wisdom-life of the law-body." In ancient times silk and brocade were forbidden for priests because, in order to produce them, it was necessary to take life. Cotton and linen were the proper materials for such garments. The Japanese, being Northern Buddhists and more advanced in their ideas, have removed a long way from these simple notions. The priests dress in rich robes; they take wives, though not in all sects; they eat meat and drink wine; and they claim that in the voluminous literature they find abundant sanction for their mode of life.

There is not a little resemblance between the official robing of the Roman Catholic order and that of Buddhist orders. Certain of the more beautiful robes worn by distinguished officials were determined upon by imperial order. Scarlet could be worn only by an archbishop who was a member of the imperial family. Purple is freely used for the outer garments of the superior clergy. A robe with three sashes is worn by a priest who was also a prince, like the lord abbot of the Hongwanji temple or his heir. In certain sects scarfs are worn, into which are sewn sacred letters or words which have magic power to ward off evil in this world of evil spirits. It is a brilliant sight to see a solemn Buddhist procession with the

priests dressed in their ceremonial robes, representing different sects and the several orders of the clergy. In ancient times priests were graded like government officials, but since the revolution of 1868 only the lord abbots have had any special recognition. Within the ranks of the Buddhist clergy, however, there are officials with authority comparable to that of an archbishop, a vice-archbishop, a bishop and vice-bishop. Then there are four grades of priests and four grades of inferior clergy.

Priests and their devout followers always carry a rosary and use it. Pilgrims and mendicant priests carry rods with rings attached which jingle as they move. There are many mendicant priests who carry bags hung over their shoulders to receive rice when it is offered to them. These carry either iron or earthen bowls for money or for food. At funerals the officiating priest sometimes carries a brush of long hair with a handle about eighteen inches long which he frequently brandishes in order to drive away the spirits of evil. During worship a priest always beats time with a gong, a bell, or a hollow wooden fish as an incentive to prayer or to the reading of the scriptures. The explanation of the use of the fish (according to a popular writer) is given thus in the scriptures known as *Basha Ron*. A mendicant, having disobeyed his master in life, became after death a big fish. On his back a tree grew which caused him great pain when it was shaken by the wind and waves. He blamed his teacher for his suffering and for the evil which had befallen him. One day, when the teacher was crossing the sea near the abode of the fish, the latter determined to have revenge; but his teacher, perceiving his purpose, made it so clear that he had brought evil upon himself by his own neglect that the fish repented and requested that the tree be removed from his back and carved into some useful temple utensil. A fish was carved and has been regularly beaten for the welfare of fish since that time. Another tradition relates that the famous Chinese priest, Hiouen-

Thsang, saved a boy from being swallowed by a fish and then advised his parent to carve a wooden fish, which, according to an imperial order, was to be struck at every temple service. Later on it was used to beat time to the reading of the scriptures, and in the Zen sect, to announce the beginning and the close of *Za Zen* (sitting in meditation).¹

People are often summoned to listen to teaching in the temples by the beating of a drum or the blowing of a shell trumpet. The ringing of bells has various meanings. Often a large bell is rung at the temple to cause suffering to cease. Tradition declares that King Asoka, who had killed thousands in battle, became a disciple of Ashvaghosa. He justly deserved retribution for the sufferings which he had caused by his acts of violence, but as a disciple he was destined to be saved from the suffering of hell. He became a fish with a thousand heads. A sword-wheel cut these off, but they grew again and were again taken off, until the sea was filled with unspeakable pain. Finally an advanced disciple (Arhat) took pity on him, sounded a bell, and the suffering ceased. Buddhism abounds in these puerile explanations of religious customs. Bells are also sounded at the time of death to awaken good thoughts and inclinations during the last hours of life.

In Buddhist temples there have always been sermons or lectures at certain times. Recently these services have become quite frequent in all temples. It is not unusual for them to have special evangelistic services, summer schools and Sunday schools very much like those of the

¹ The fish has also been used in early Christian tradition as a symbol, which probably stood for the faithful followers of the great Fisherman. It is to be seen in the catacombs at Rome and on early Celtic and Teutonic stones in England and France and in the British Museum. The five letters of the Greek word for fish (ἰχθῦς) form the initials of the five Greek words meaning "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour" (Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτὴρ). The real origin of the practice of the Zen sect is unknown. Can there be any relation between the Buddhist and Christian symbols?

Christians. The bells are sometimes used to call the worshipers, but not always. In certain temples the bell is sounded to remind the priests of their duties. Sometimes at midnight the bell calls them to think on things heavenly. Before a Buddhist god-shrine a bell hangs ready for the worshiper to draw the attention of the god before prayer. The bell is also struck at intervals as the priests chant the sacred scriptures.

5. *The Use of the Rosary in Buddhism*

A rosary is worn very conspicuously by Buddhist priests and devotees. It is said to have been introduced at a very early period from Korea. The first string was presented to Prince Shotoku, a string which is still highly prized as a relic. One which was brought from India is cherished among the treasures at Nara.

The origin of the rosary is explained as follows: "When S'akyamuni was in Mount Ryojusen a certain king sent him a message: 'My country is remote, small and often afflicted with war. The five cereals are expensive, and epidemics carry away many people, year after year. This causes me deep sorrow. The law of the incarnate Buddha (Tathagata) is too great for me to follow. Lord of the world, take pity on me and tell me how I can go about my business and yet be faithful to the law with ease so as to be free from the evils that are the common lot of man.' The Buddha replied: 'To get rid of illusion, karma² and suffering, make a string of one hundred and eight beads from the berries of a certain plant and count one whenever you call upon Buddha, the Law or the priesthood. Do this hundreds, thousands, yes, hundreds of thousands of times, and you will cut loose from the one hundred and eight illusions.' The king rejoiced very greatly over this message. He made many strings of beads and gave them to his friends and relatives, who

² Karma is the result of moral action or thought which survives death and continues in transmigration.

helped to initiate the practice of stimulating the prayer life by the telling of beads." Of course, there are other explanations of this very common custom.

The perfect number of beads on a string is one hundred and eight, though there may be as many as one thousand and eighty or as few as fourteen.³ The perfect number represents the two standpoints from which one enters the religious life: the negative, or what one casts aside, and the positive, or what one gains. The rosary is divided into two sections, each representing the fifty-four stages of becoming a Buddhist saint (*bodhisattva*). The string represents "the man whose eye of wisdom is free from obstruction and whose act is effective." The continuity of the thread represents one's steady progression toward Buddhahood. The large bead in the middle represents Buddha or Amida, and the order of counting is always toward this Buddha bead as representing the completion and perfection of all beings. From that point the devotee turns back, symbolizing the mercy of Amida, which turns again to the nine worlds, rejecting the glory of Buddhahood in order to save all beings.

There is great merit in simply wearing the rosary. Wearing it upon the head, about the neck or on the arm has in each case its own significance and merit. The rosary has power to protect from evil and instills a spirit of veneration; therefore "the cause of happiness is in him who carries it, completing all merit."

The rosary must be handled and worn with the greatest reverence. One rule reads thus: "It is taught that the rosary should be wound around the neck; but to one who follows wrong doctrine it will be as skulls around his neck. It is taught that it should be put on the ear, but the ear must be clean. Ordinary ears are foul. It is taught that it should be placed in the queue, but it must

³ The article "Rosaries" in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. IX, declares that the rosary used by all sects has one hundred and twelve beads exclusive of two large ones.

first be wrapped in clean paper or in cloth and placed in a box. It is more often placed on the wrist or elbow, but they must be washed and perfumed. In a word, look upon the rosary as Buddha."

Many interesting stories are told about rosaries. The rosary in Buddhism has a place not unlike that which it takes in Roman Catholicism. These superstitious stories represent the way in which the great masses of Buddhists think and must be reckoned with by one who aims to understand Japanese religious life. For example, as late as 1923, when the great Kwannon Temple escaped the earthquake and the fire, the people said that dew formed on the trees and sprinkled the temple with water, thus preserving it from the heat and flame.

Some of the stories about the rosary are strange and mystical. One is that Honen Shonin carried a rosary which he called "star," because on one night it amazed him by shining like a star, shooting out bright rays and lighting up the room. This rosary he presented to the emperor, and later on it became the property of the abbot at the Choin Temple. Another story relates that Shinran Shonin was banished to the small province of Echigo where he underwent great hardships. One morning, after he had tried in vain to convince his host of the truth of his teachings, he hung his rosary on a cherry tree, saying: "If my teaching is true, this tree will send forth flowers shaped like my rosary." In proof of the truth of this tradition the tree may still be seen. Another story runs to the effect that the founder of a Zen temple, who had become a believer of the Pure Land sect (Jodo), used to call upon the famous priest, Rennyo Shonin, whenever he went to Kyoto. On one occasion he asked for a sign to prove that the Pure Land teaching was true. Rennyo told him to "hang the rosary on the foot of the sun," that is, throw it up into the air. He threw it up, but it fell to the ground. Then Rennyo threw up his own rosary, and it remained suspended in the air. This convinced the

Zen priest that it represented miraculous power ; he thankfully received the rosary and placed it among the sacred relics in his temple. One time while restringing this rosary he missed one of the crystal beads. That very night at midnight a strange priest dressed in a black robe appeared and said : "Go out and look ; flowers are falling like snow, but they are maple leaves." Wondering greatly, he opened the door and there, lying on the step, bright and shining, was the missing crystal. The common people are exceedingly fond of repeating these stories.

IV

BUDDHISM AN OTHER-WORLDLY RELIGION

Buddhism ministers to the dead; it is preëminently a religion for the other world. Its devotees are always planning how they may get ready to meet the experiences which may be theirs after death. The daily and weekly activities in which people take part cannot be understood if they are regarded merely as routine duties or pleasures. It is a common sight to see pilgrims wearing shrouds in which they expect to be buried. When they visit a temple or shrine they request the priest to stamp on their shroud the seal of the temple. These seals are not ornaments, but certificates. When death comes to such a pilgrim he is buried in this shroud, which has gained from these seals special mysterious power to carry his spirit successfully through its dread experiences in the after-world.

Two women lived alone in a little Japanese cottage—a mother and her daughter-in-law. The son had been killed in the Russian war. The two women had been greatly cheered by the visits of a Bible woman who had taught them to sing Christian hymns. It so happened that a woman missionary called to see them on the anniversary of the death of the son. She noted with some sense of disapproval and surprise that the household Buddhist “God-Shelf” or shrine¹ was decorated and that candles were burning before the ancestral tablets. The mother politely explained that these arrangements did not mean that they

¹ Strictly speaking, the shelf is for Shinto emblems. Buddhists objects are usually in a case like an old-fashioned secretary with doors which open and shut.

had been worshipping at the shrine, but only that, on the anniversary of her son's death, they were paying reverent respect to his spirit. Her explanation was probably correct that their action had little or no religious significance. Many of these customs among the Japanese which originated in superstition are becoming, even among those who are not avowed Christians, simply beautiful symbols, like the placing of flowers on the graves of the dead. This gradually changed significance of old customs and ceremonies constitutes one of the problems with which open-minded Westerners must constantly deal.

Speaking in general, the Japanese people identify religion with the attainment of peace. One frequently hears it said that any religion which gives peace is acceptable. At the same time their ideas of heaven and hell are as realistic as those pictured by medieval Christian saints. An ancient Buddhist saint, Esshin Sozu, who is sometimes called the Dante of Japan, drew a picture of paradise and another of hell. The latter picture was so realistic that when it was placed in the imperial palace the court ladies and servants could fairly hear the devils shriek at night and requested that the picture be removed. The Buddhist imagination excels itself in picturing the tortures of hell. They say that men who have given themselves up to covetousness and lust are doomed to fall into the state of the "hungry devil," where they will be cruelly tortured. Because of their inordinate desires in life they are deprived of food for thousands of ages. When food is placed before them it turns to flame before it can reach their mouths.

I. *Funeral Customs*

Buddhism observes four different forms of funeral rites: the water funeral, where the body is thrown to the fish; the fire funeral, where the body is cremated; the earth funeral, where the body is buried; and the forest funeral, where the body is thrown out into the forest to

wild beasts. The idea underlying all these is that man is a temporary collection of all these elements—earth, fire, water, and air ²—and that at death they are disintegrated. In Japan the two common methods of disposal of bodies are by cremation and burial. Strictly speaking, according to the Buddhist scriptures, burial is regarded as the lowest form of disposal, cremation as the mean, and water and forest methods, which distribute the body for the benefit of sentient beings, as the highest. When burial is the chosen form, the body is placed in a wooden coffin. If a body is cremated, the relatives gather the ashes and bones which remain and place them in a small wooden box about a foot square. Then the ashes are either buried in the cemetery or deposited in a temple, and a memorial stone is erected.

On the day of the funeral the relatives and friends gather at the house; priests are also present to read from the scriptures and to perform the last rites. In the Buddhist Discipline it says: "At a funeral let the officiating priest read aloud from the scriptures and pray for the dead, whom he shall follow to the grave." The priests are supposed to be the means of leading the soul out of the bondage of life and death into the realm of Nirvana.

It is customary for the friends to present gifts to the family of the deceased. Usually they give money so that incense or something of the sort may be purchased. Someone is always on duty to enroll the names of all the guests and to receive their visiting cards. If the deceased belongs to a wealthy home, the procession to the temple or cemetery is an imposing sight. Usually it proceeds as follows: In the van coolies carry two large unlighted Japanese lanterns symbolic of lighting the spirit on its way. Then come flags, few or many, one of which bears the name

² Sometimes the elements are numbered as five, the fifth being what we might render as "spirit" or "ether." In that case it is represented symbolically by the top portion of the stupa given on page 44. Brinkley's *Japanese-English Dictionary* gives the five elements as wood, fire, earth, metal and water.

of the deceased, the others being presented by friends as an act of merit.

One frequently sees thousands of little paper flags along the side of the road when approaching famous temples in Japan. The little flag-pole is like an elongated toothpick. The flag, made of paper, usually has an indefinite description of the worshiper, such as "A Woman of the Year of the Rat." Sometimes the vow of the devotee is also written. These little flags are sometimes given in fulfilment of a promise to present flags to the god, if the worshiper's prayer is answered.

Floral offerings which are exceedingly numerous and elaborate follow, borne by coolies. Following these are offerings of various kinds of food, fruit, beancakes, and the like. Then comes the sacred "sasaki" tree, with other small trees carried aloft; then a large cage of birds, which are set free along the way to signify the mercy of the deceased. After these symbolic objects comes a group of young priests and hired mourners, all followed by the high priest who rides in a jinrikisha with a huge umbrella spread over his head. Right behind him are those who carry the bier on which rests the casket holding the body placed in a sitting posture. The casket is like a beautiful little house, with curved roof, and carved sides, adorned with silken curtains. Immediately behind the bier come the near relatives, dressed in white, the mourning color, and last of all the family and its guests. On reaching the temple the procession often walks about in circles several times before depositing the casket in its place, in order to confuse any spirits which may be following or hovering about. Water is placed near by, since the dead are supposed to suffer thirst. In case of cremation, each child of the deceased and the friends light incense sticks and throw them on the funeral pile before the fire is lighted.

Immediately after death the departed spirit is supposed to be in a temporary intermediate state, awaiting its final destination to one of the six states of being. If there is

no doubt about the designation of the dead, there is no intermediate state; the best people go direct to paradise, and the worst go direct to hell. The weak or uncertain occupy a place of temporary abode, their condition changing every seventh day until the forty-ninth day, when they are designated to one of the three worlds, or to one of the six states of existence.

The relief of the dead from the evils which may threaten them offers a great opportunity to the unscrupulous priest in dealing with the people. One of the scriptures³ go so far as to declare: "If a person who has committed the four heavy crimes, the five treacheries and the ten evils, and has fallen into hell after death, has the *dharani* (mystic forms of prayer) pronounced over his body or even over his garments, he will be saved, and enabled to throw off the body given to him after death as a natural result of the crimes he has committed in life, and to enter the Pure Land." Another scripture says: "If the *dharani* is read or pronounced, sung, held in the hand, or carried next to the skin, sewed in the garment, or swallowed it is sure to give the person the unshakable and supreme wisdom (*bodhi*)."⁴ Another writer tells the following story: A mendicant saint stole a priest's property for his own use. In punishment he became seriously ill and cried out with pain. Taking pity on him, a Brahman wrote the mystic scripture on a piece of paper and put it on his neck. The pain was removed, but death ensued. By the law of cause and effect he went to hell, but immediately the fires went out and all the sinners were relieved. The astonished keepers reported the matter to King Emma (who judges departed souls). When the grave of the mendicant was examined, the inspectors were greeted by waves of light proceeding from the *dharani* which still hung on the corpse, while heavenly beings surrounded the body in reverential attitude. By reason of

³ These scripture quotations are given by a popular writer and represent the customary explanations as the people understand them.

the power of these *dharani* the man was received into the thirty-third heaven. By such tales as these the poor and ignorant Japanese are taught to believe that a passage of scripture written on the shroud by a priest will have miraculous value. It is a common practice to put money in the coffin for the use of the dead. The presence of priests is indispensable for other attentions paid to the dead, whether the cutting of the hair or the bathing of the body or a baptismal ceremony at which a posthumous name is given.

2. *The Festival for the Spirits of the Dead*

One of the best-known and most popular events in the Japanese year is the annual *Bon* festival, the festival of the lanterns, or the festival for the spirits of the dead, as it is variously called. It is said to have been established for Japan in the eight century by the Empress Shomu, who issued an edict commanding its observance by the people. The idea of the festival is to benefit spirits and relatives, especially parents, in the other world; but even while parents are still living the merit of this festival brings them health and prosperity, and assures them after death the joys of heaven, delivering them from pain and from the evil states of existence. All Buddhists believe in a series of existences through which spirits must pass in expiation of the evils they committed in life. Six of these are thus described: they become successively animals of ferocious and cruel character; invisible evil spirits of various descriptions with large bellies and small mouths; thirsty spirits for whom water is changed into fire; greedy spirits who feed only on offal; others who devour their own offspring; and those whose bodies are pierced by their own hairs which are sharp as swords. There are eight hot hells and eight freezing hells, all gone through because of evil practices. Such experiences of bitter torment the *Bon* festival endeavors to alleviate. Fires which symbolize purification are lighted along the way by

which people go to the festival, to light the good spirits on their way and to ward off evil spirits who love the darkness. These are lighted again at the close to assist them to return. Sometimes the gravestones are laid flat just before the festival begins, so that the spirits can readily escape. They are left down until the festival is over and the spirits have returned to their own abode.

The old tradition of the origin of this festival is that when Mokuren, a disciple of Buddha, had attained within himself the three forms of clairvoyance, the six forms of meditation and the eight forms of deliverance, he immediately remembered his mother who had suffered so much for him. By his supernatural powers he scanned all existence from the super-formless heaven down to the nethermost hell. He discovered his father enjoying heaven, but his mother was suffering the torments of the hell of hunger. He hastened to offer her a bowl of rice, but it was turned to flame before she could eat it. He then hurried to where the Buddha was preaching and begged for power to deliver his dear mother from torment. He was told that neither he nor any other power could deliver her at once, but that when in July all the priests assembled he could organize a special service which would deliver not only her but all other unfortunates who were in torment. On that day he was to offer food and drink to all spirits of the dead, and to present gifts to all priests, through which service his parents and friends would be saved. The Buddha ordered the priests to pray for Mokuren's mother and kinfolk as far back as the seventh generation. On July 15th all was done as the Buddha had commanded. Priests prayed, chanted and ate, and Mokuren's mother was delivered. Mokuren was so overjoyed that he requested that this festival might be established through all succeeding generations. To this the Buddha gladly acceded, saying: "Keep this service on July 15th every year. Invite the priests and offer them food and drink, and pray that your parents and ancestors

for generations may be spared the suffering of the hell of hunger and be born in a world of joy. A true Buddhist must be filial and grateful to his parents and ancestors for their love." From April 15th to July 15th the Buddhist priests and nuns are supposed to remain in retirement for study and meditation. They then go forth, after confessing their faults to one another, to seek alms, to pray and to read the scriptures to the people during this popular festival.

3. *Acquiring Merit on Behalf of the Dead*

In Buddhism it is a habit to acquire merit for the dead by special religious services on every seventh day after death for seven periods, in order to insure a happy destination. On the forty-ninth day a special feast, of cake and tea, are given to the friends of the deceased to indicate the end of the period. Some relic or keepsake is often given to each friend as a reminder to pray for the soul of the departed. On each seventh day a priest is invited to the house to perform these special services. He cuts flags out of white paper, because according to the scriptures a person who has the possibility of being born in heaven sees something like white flags hanging in the air, and, if he takes hold of them, he is sure to reach heaven. This is one reason given for the carrying of flags at funerals.

From Confucianism Buddhists adopted the custom of commemorating the one hundredth day, the thirteenth month, and the twenty-fifth month after a man's death. Subsequently a memorial service for him is observed in every year ending in three or seven except the forty-third and forty-seventh. The fiftieth anniversary is kept by every grandchild who is impressed with a real sense of gratitude. At such times priests are invited and given food and money. The scriptures say: "On the anniversary of the death of one's parents or brothers, one invites the priests and observes the Bodhisattva Sila (a form of baptism, for which scripture reading may be substituted)

in order to assist the departed to make sure to be born in the world of men." It is said that a certain king, on the anniversary of his father's death, used to invite the Buddha and his priests and to offer them food. The king listened to the Buddha's teaching with deep respect and waited upon him personally during the meal. Such reverence for the priests is a usual part of such an anniversary.

The story is told that once the Buddha and Ananda, when going along a river, saw five hungry spirits passing along, singing as they went. Later on, they saw several hundred spirits who were weeping. Ananda asked the Buddha what was the meaning of this, and was told that the first group of spirits had just been set free from torment by the religious services held by their sons and relatives. The second group were not so fortunate; their sons were hard-hearted and neglectful. Hence flames had come upon them and they were crying out in bitter torment. So great is the merit of the scripture that even to cherish the thought of reading it on behalf of the dead is of some avail. Such beliefs and customs as these make the priesthood seem indispensable.

4. *Offerings and Services for the Dead*

In the early morning one may witness an elaborate ceremony for the dead at almost any large Buddhist temple. On receipt of certain fees the priest brings out the tablet for the dead, reads appropriate scriptures and repeats prayers, much as Roman Catholics do. These special masses for the dead are intended not only to supply spiritual food but to give deliverance from the terrible condition into which the departed one may have fallen. It benefits all those who have departed. This ceremony also dates back to India. The story which accounts for it is thus told: "One night as Ananda was sitting in meditation, a hungry devil appeared to him, gnashing his teeth and spitting flames. He was lean and bent, his hair disheveled and his throat the size of a pin. He announced that Ananda would die within three days and come to

his abode. Ananda was frightened and asked how to avert such a fate. The apparition told him to offer rice and drink to the myriads of hungry spirits and also to Brahman hermits. The spirit then asked in turn how he might be liberated and permitted to enjoy the three treasures, Buddha, the Law and the priesthood. Ananda reported this vision to Buddha, who said he could help him by a special mystic word called 'measureless, irresistible power for food and drink' which had been given to him by the goddess of mercy. This word would produce food and drink sufficient for all the hungry devils in every world and would free them from their sufferings. 'Repeat the mystic word,' he said, 'placing a bowl of rice on the ground or in the water, and you shall live.' Ananda performed the rite successfully and lived." From that time this mass for the dead is said to have been celebrated. Zen believers celebrate it at the time of the Bon festival.

Food is offered, not only to the priests, but before the ancestral tablets. One chopstick is placed on end to represent fire, the other is laid flat to represent water, the two elements together representing purification. This symbolism is supposed to purify the food and utensils used by the dead, and also the offerings to beings in all directions, horizontally and vertically. Sometimes both chopsticks are placed in the same upright position to indicate that all differences are removed.

The official directions in the scriptures declare: "A person who thinks of the teaching and calls upon the name of Buddha shall have his hair shaved, if he is a layman, and shall provide himself with four receptacles for food. Carrying them from door to door he shall beg for food. When he has procured sufficient food, he shall go to a clean spring, wash the food and divide it into five portions. One shall be for hungry wayfarers; one for beings in the water; one for beings on the land; one for his parents and ancestors for seven generations back; and one for hungry spirits. The last portion, whether small

or great, is for himself." The Emperor Godaigo asked a priest to explain how the dead received help from this ceremony, and the priest replied: "The bee flies from flower to flower collecting honey. The color and fragrance of the flower are none the worse for that." This illustration is significant in that it corresponds to the Egyptian explanation of food offered to the dead. The departed spirits eat not only the steam from the rice, but also the smell. "Those who are unhappy eat bad odors, while the happy enjoy good ones."

There are differences of opinion about wine offered to the dead, since wine is supposed to be contrary to the will of Buddha. Some declare that it is proper to offer wine to a spirit, because it is the act of a Buddhist saint who desires to serve the wish of sentient beings. This opinion is supported by the saying: "One of the six perfections requires the fulfillment of every wish of others. A Buddhist saint may then offer wine with no offence." But another scripture says: "A man who takes drinking utensils and passes them to another, causing him to drink, will have no hands for five hundred stages of existence. How much more sinful is it to drink oneself." One writer seeks to reconcile this contradiction by declaring that Buddhism is as great as the ocean and can adjust itself to both statements.

5. *Meritorious Practices*

There is great merit in giving a handful of rice; it brings blessing to the dead who die on that day. But to be efficacious it must be truly generous. It is said in the scriptures that Buddha asked alms in a certain city of India. A Brahman, seeing him repeatedly, wondered in vexation why this priest came so often. Perceiving his thought, Buddha sang of the merit of almsgiving:

Timely rain repeatedly falls; the five cereals repeatedly grow.
 Good acts repeatedly done bring repeatedly good results.
 To receive life repeatedly is to receive death repeatedly.
 Who has life and death repeatedly?

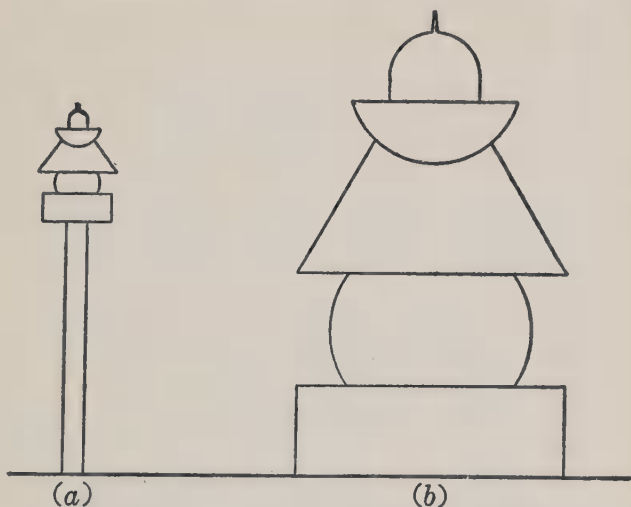
Then the Brahman filled his iron bowl with food and handed it to the Buddha who reproved him, saying: "Because I sang you the verses, you have been shamed into giving alms; they are unclean, I cannot receive them." The Brahman then asked to whom he should give them. The Buddha replied: "There is none in heaven or earth to receive your offering; throw it away into water where there is no living thing." When the Brahman obeyed, the water boiled up, and smoke and fire appeared. Seeing this miraculous result, the Brahman repented and became a faithful disciple. Such narratives have a real influence among Buddhists.

Another meritorious practice is called "*Shojin*,"¹ which signifies a reverential attitude by which one keeps his body clean and his heart pure on the anniversary of his parent's death. The Buddhist scripture says: "If you practice '*Shojin*' there is nothing impossible to you. Drops of water can pierce a stone if they fall continuously. Unless a religious man is assiduous, he is like a man trying to strike fire by friction, but failing because he ceases before the wood becomes hot. *Shojin* is one of the six perfections meaning to arouse from sloth; it will cause a man who is engrossed in business to make the anniversary of his parent's death the occasion for retiring from his worldly pursuits, ceasing from evil and doing good. It is not mere fasting; it means putting the heart and soul into whatever one does, increasing the repetitions of the name of Amida for the benefit of the dead, and decorating the altar with food and flowers; praying earnestly for the dead and to Buddha who is able to double the good already done and transfer the merit of such conduct to the deliverance of the dead." When practicing *Shojin* Buddhists refrain from eating any food which involves the taking of life. The practice holds a high place in the esteem of the people.

There is very great merit in setting up a tablet or a stone over the grave of the dead. The proper stone is a

¹ *Shojin* (*sho*, to pound; *shin* (*jin*), assiduously).

peculiar shape representing the universal Buddha or reality. The base is a cube representing the earth; above this is a ball, representing the water; above the ball is a tri-



(a) This *stupa*, made of wood with some mystic words in Sanscrit (*dharani*), is placed on or behind the grave on the anniversary of the death of a friend. In the esoteric sects it symbolizes the Great Sun Tathagata.

(b) Many tombstones take this shape.

It is interesting to compare these elements with the Greek (see the elements of Empedocles and the "Great Void" of Anaximander).

angle, betokening fire; still above is a crescent, representing the element of air; above the four symbols of the four elements is a sphere with a pointed end, meaning "emptiness," which is the universal Buddha or reality. The scripture says that if you make a thousand of these tablets as long as an arm, even though you commit the five sins, you will surely work out your enlightenment. A certain man is said to have been cast into the nether world because, out of resentment at injustice received from the emperor, he committed murder and destroyed temples. This man sent back a request to his dependents to put up a thousand of these tablets in order to save him

from the suffering of hell. A somewhat similar, though even greater accumulation of merit, comes from the erection of pagodas, for which wealthy men sometimes bequeath large sums.

Another deed of merit is to visit the temple one hundred times. This can be accomplished at one visit by going into the temple, bowing before the altar, and retiring outside the temple gate; then returning and again bowing before the altar as before, and so on for one hundred times.

Much merit is held to accrue from the presentation of flags or banners to a temple. "In the time of Buddha a wealthy man had a son born in his house. At the time of this happy event a miraculous flag appeared in the sky. When the boy grew up he followed the Buddha, and someone asked the Buddha why it was that such happy circumstances followed this particular disciple. He replied: 'In a former existence he performed a deed of merit. Ninety-one ages previous a certain king gathered ashes of a Buddha and enshrined them in a pagoda of four treasures, honoring the ashes with great ceremony. Then a man voluntarily performed a great religious service near the pagoda, presenting a flag to be hung on the tower. For nineteen ages the merit of this act protected him from evil, and at last he was led to see the Buddha in the world again, and leave his home and find enlightenment.' " The Pure Land scripture says: "The sons who do something good for the soul of the deceased will get back one seventh of the good they do. If they make a flag for the dead, they will be secure from the eight evils; the flag fluttering in the wind till it is worn out will bring immeasurable blessing. . . . One king undertook to build eighty-four thousand pagodas, but falling ill he substituted flags, and gave them to the priests to hang up for him. He was awarded twelve years to live, and the flags are called 'Divine flags of more life.' "

V

PRESENT-DAY BUDDHISM'S EMPHASIS ON MORAL BETTERMENT

Buddhism has its own methods of emphasizing morality and purity of life. The methods are usually primitive, but the ideas behind them are often good.

1. *The Spring and Autumn Festivals*

The equinoctial festivals in the spring and fall owe their origin, probably, to nature worship, yet they have great religious value. The Emperor Shomu (724-748) fixed a period of seven days twice a year, during which time people should remind themselves of the importance of doing good and not evil. These festivals are regarded as having a special relation to Amida, who dwells in the Western Pure Land. In spring and autumn, at the time of the equinox, the sun sets due west, at the western gate of paradise. On the middle day of the festival people are advised to call upon Amida with their eyes toward the setting sun. Spring and autumn were chosen for the festival because, in the middle of spring (February) and in the middle of autumn (August), the sun rises due east and sets due west, where the kingdom of Amida Buddha stands. Thus this festival reminds people of the exact place where Amida lives and helps them to renew their wish to be born in his land. Additional reasons are that the fifteenth of February is the anniversary of the Buddha's death, and in August the weather is very favorable for attending a festival and the time of the year when the farmers have most leisure. In fixing a period of seven

days the authorities follow an exhortation of the Amida sutra: "Repeat Amida's name earnestly for a day, for two days, three days, four days, five days, six days, seven days." An ancient priest found that in seven days he had repeated the name of Amida one million times. Since then worshipers aim at a million repetitions a week that they may surely "reach the other shore."

On the birthday of the Lord Buddha April 8th, an ancient custom is still observed of pouring tea prepared from perfumed leaves over the head of the image of Buddha, using little bamboo dippers with very long handles for the purpose. This ceremony is quite popular among the common people.¹ In 1916 the Tokyo Buddhists modernized the ceremony by converting it into a flower festival, celebrated in one of the large parks of the city. The young priests from the Buddhist colleges carry on evangelistic services, and the young women from the Buddhist girls' schools go out selling little buttonhole bouquets in aid of the charity hospitals. It is quite like "tag day" in America.

On the third of February, which represents on the average,² the close of the old Chinese year and the opening of the new one, there is a great and joyous festival held all over Japan. It commemorates the deliverance of the people from an epidemic in the time of the Emperor Mommu (697-707), when, in answer to prayer, gods and Buddhas restored health and happiness to the country. On that day in every home they scatter beans, crying, "Devils out, good luck in," while the children scramble for the beans. On this occasion in one of the temples near Kyoto they have an interesting custom. In the gathering gloom of evening a strange procession approaches the temple court; it is headed by three demons, followed by the god of fortune with a hood over his head and a hammer

¹ This ceremony may be seen to good advantage in Hibiya Park, Tokyo, each year.

² The old Chinese year did not close on an absolutely regular date.

in his hand. Then follow nine children representing certain "stars of good luck," and lastly a number of priests and laymen. When the procession arrives at the temple, the god of luck casts off his hood, making himself known; and, raising his hammer, he cries, "Devils out; good luck in." The demons start to run and are pursued by the nine star children and by others, out into the temple court and around the temple three times, then out of the front gate which is closed with a bang after them. The demons are thus locked out and happiness is in for another year. The women and girls dress very gaily for this happy festival. It may be a very old festival adopted by Buddhism.

2. *The Baptismal and Dedication Ceremonies*

Baptism is not, as many suppose, an exclusively Christian ceremony. Similar beautiful ceremonies are observed in both Buddhism and Shinto. A description of the ceremony of the Zen sect will illustrate them all. The applicants for baptism gather in the temple at the appointed time. Their first duty is to repent of their sins and to confess them before the officiating high priest. "According to Jokei, a priest of the olden time, there are two kinds of repentance. The one is emotional: the believer is so overcome by a sense of sin that he throws himself prostrate and weeps profusely, shedding as it were drops of blood. The other is rational: the believer sits upright contemplating the real nature of his mind, and its eternal, absolute essence, which raises it above the contaminating influences of sin. The former is a good way of getting rid of sin; but the latter will destroy as much sin as would condemn a man to millions of ages of birth and death. Even if a man's insight does not go deep, the merit of this rational form of repentance is inestimable."*

When the candidates have expressed their repentance of

* The writer was permitted to witness this ceremony by special request of a friend. These quotations were given him in explanation of the ceremony.

sin, they next bow meekly before a confessor and say: "All the evils I have committed are due to avarice, self-satisfaction and folly. With humility I now confess them all." They are then in a position to trust the three treasures, Buddha, the Law and the Priesthood, and they say:

O hail Buddha, I put my trust in thee;
 O hail Law, I put my trust in thee;
 O hail Priesthood, I put my trust in thee;
 I trust in Buddha supreme, the Law supreme, and the Priesthood
 supreme.
 I trust in Buddha perfect, the Law perfect, and the Priesthood
 perfect.

Candidates then pass into another room where the officiating priest declares to them the Buddhist commandments, which they promise to obey. He then baptizes them by the sprinkling of water, saying: "Herewith I give you the commandments. Henceforth maintain faith in Buddha, the Master. Do not worship or follow the evil one, or heresies. Believe only on the Buddha, full of compassion, sympathy, and love." Following this ceremony the candidates are gathered in groups on the altar and dedicated to Buddha, while the high priests, each with a staff in one hand, beat time on the floor and chant: "All beings that have received the commandments gain the rank of Buddha. Their place is the place of Buddhist saints."

Professor Yamaguchi in the *Mission News*, December, 1917, thus described the baptismal ceremony according to the most esoteric sects: "I received Buddhist baptism fifteen years ago," he wrote, "and on receiving it thought I entered into a life of faith. A beautiful metal vessel almost full of water was placed on a beautiful stand. The officiating priest approached me and sprinkled water upon my head three times, reciting in prayer a magic word. The reason why I had not been able to enter a life of faith prior to this was because I had worldly passions: but by the fact that I had pure water sprinkled upon my

head, I felt that all my worldly passions were taken away, and that I was really entering a life of faith." Before he entered the room where the final part of the ceremony was to take place, he was blindfolded, to signify that the eyes which had been accustomed to see worldly impurities were to be regenerated. Buddhists say that an impenitent person would find himself unable to make his way blindfolded into the next room where the remainder of the ceremony takes place. When he has entered, the cover is suddenly removed from the eyes of the candidate and the room is flooded with light. In the center of the room is a picture showing the world of Buddhas. Professor Yamaguchi declared: "I felt as if I had entered paradise. When I was at the height of my joy, the officiating priest instructed me not to cherish any evil thought nor to be tempted by worldly passions. He then uttered several other exhortations which I was strictly forbidden to repeat, and I swore not to do so. Having finished this rite, I realized that Buddha and I had become one, and at the same time the priest began to treat me as a Buddha in every respect."

VI

PHILOSOPHICAL SECTS OF BUDDHISM

One of the distinctive facts about Buddhism in Japan is the number of important sects which have been introduced from China; an equally significant fact is that what may be regarded as the two indigenous sects are the most prosperous and popular to-day, at least among the lower classes. The Ritsu, Jojitsu, San-Ron, Hosso, Kusha, and Kegon sects were introduced to Japan in the age of Nara. The Tendai and Shingon were transmitted from China in the ninth century by two famous priests. The Jodo and Zen were transmitted from China in the twelfth century; and in the thirteenth century the True Sect of Jodo and the Nichiren sects were founded by great Japanese religious leaders, Shinran and Nichiren, who became the most popular personalities in the religious history of Japan.

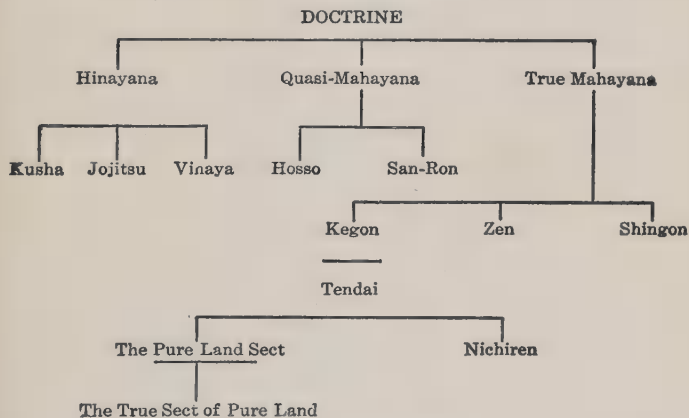
Buddhist sects may be classified according to doctrine and according to their method of salvation. The following chart is an attempt to classify them according to doctrine.

1. *Hinayana Sects*

The Vinaya is the only Hinayana ¹ sect extant. It embodies "the precepts of moral asceticism and monastic discipline" of Southern Buddhism. The Japanese Vinaya is related back to the Dharmagupta school founded by a

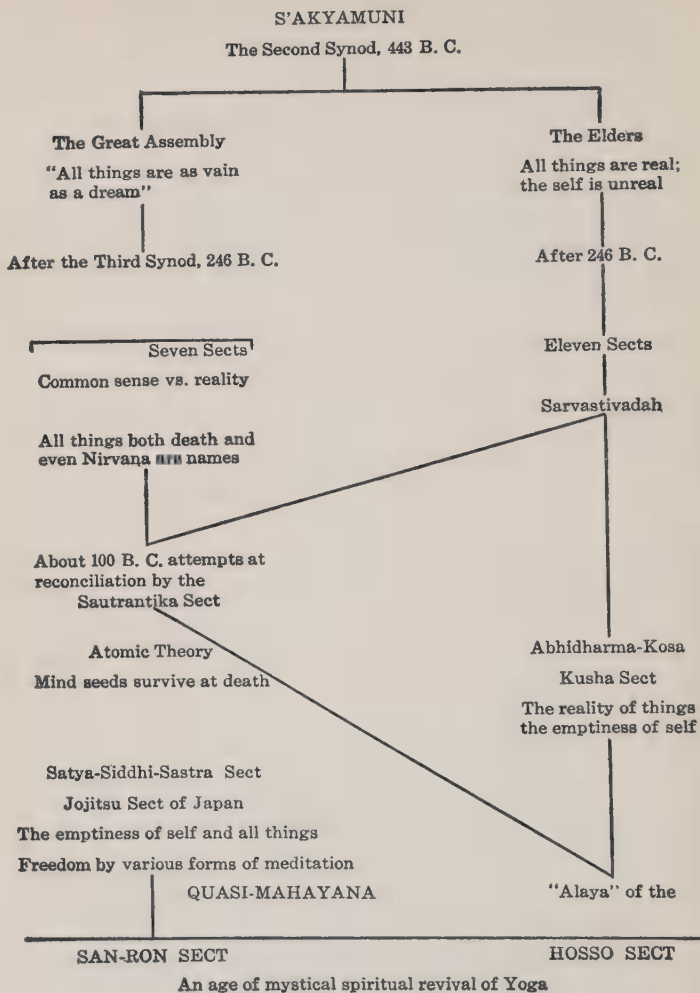
¹ The terms *Hinayana*, "little vehicle," and *Mahayana*, "great vehicle," represent, respectively, Southern Buddhism and Northern Buddhism.

man of that name, an Indian mystic of Ceylon, who lived about the beginning of the fifth century. It was supposed to be a branch of the Hinayana school known as the Sarvastivada sect. Its late origin and its emphasis upon contemplation, meditation, practical morality and Buddhist ritual made it possible for Dosen, a great Chinese priest, to introduce the sect into Japan in the seventh century. Dosen said: "If man does not practice meditation, he cannot grasp the truth; if he does not keep



all the good precepts he cannot perfect meditation." The moral precepts of Southern Buddhism have thus been retained by the Mahayana schools of Japan.

The Kusha and Jojitsu sects of Southern Buddhism have not been active in Japan, but an understanding of their teachings is essential to any clear grasp of Buddhist doctrine. In order to make clear their historical value the following chart will be helpful. This chart does not represent all the various shades of doctrine represented by the twenty sects of Southern Buddhism, but only the outstanding influences which were at work according to Japanese accounts of the historical development of Buddhism.



A close study of these doctrinal tendencies reveals a controversy over the nature of reality and the self. At first thinkers distinguished clearly between the reality of

things and the emptiness of things, but toward the end of the period these two views became somewhat confused. The Jojitsu scripture, which is supposed to have been written much later by Harivarman, is doctrinally related to this period. It is an eclectic teaching, laying stress upon meditation as a means of escaping from the illusion of both the reality of self and the existence of things. In this it seems to be more in harmony with the liberal line of development, and some claim that it is not, properly speaking, the work of Hinayana Buddhists. The Kusha sect, on the other hand, is a clear, strong representation of the more orthodox line of Buddhist thinkers and teaches all the doctrines of Southern Buddhism, including the four truths, the six states of being, the twelve-linked chain of causation, the six organs of sense and the reality of the external world dominated by the law of transmigration. The "Four Truths" are *ku*, suffering; *shu*, combination; *metsu*, destruction and *do*, way. The "Six States of Being" refer to six progressive states of existence into which the three worlds are divided, namely: Hell, hungry ghosts, the animal world, the demon world, the human world and paradise. These are subdivided so as to include all imaginable kinds of existence. "Hell" is divided into eight hot and eight cold hells. "The Twelve-linked Chain of Causation" is described briefly in Warren's *Buddhism in Translations*, p. 173. "The Six Organs of Sense" are the sources of six kinds of knowledge received through the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind. From the standpoint of doctrine, Southern Buddhism had fallen into a dilemma, one sect affirming the reality of things, the other denying it. At this stage the so-called Quasi-Mahayana doctrine arose.

2. *Quasi-Mahayana Sects*

Quasi-Mahayana doctrine arose as a result of a revival of interest in the invisible and an emphasis upon the mys-

tic reality of "the noble middle way." Two sects belonging to this stage of development have been introduced to Japan: the San-Ron sect, which is based upon three sastras supposed to explain all the teachings of S'akyamuni in order to lead men into the middle path; and the Hosso sect which teaches the middle path of "true emptiness and wonderful existence." The San-Ron sect makes a distinction between relative and absolute truth in order to free men from the popular confusion between the emptiness of things and the real existence of things, as a result of which they are bound by the chains of transmigration. The name of the sect is "The Three Sastra Sect." These three sastras were composed by Nagarjuna and Deva. They teach the middle path: "the truth is nothing but the state where thoughts come to an end." This is obtained by meditation and is called Buddhahood. The San-Ron sect and the Jojitsu sect were introduced to China by Kumarajiva, who was carried there as a prisoner in the fourth century. They were brought to Japan from Korea in 625 A. D. by a Korean priest, Ekwan.

The Hosso sect classifies all the teachings of Buddha under three categories which resemble Hegel's methods of thought: the existence of things, the emptiness of things, and the middle path. Many detailed explanations of reality are given, but the most interesting is the theory of Alaya causation which resembles a Seminal-Logos, a substitute for the self and the forerunner of the universal mind of Buddha or the Absolute as taught in true Mahayana doctrine.

Southern Buddhism recognizes six mental qualities, or sense faculties, connected with the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind. Southern Buddhists denied the existence of the self and faced the problem of retaining the identity of the individual in the whirl of transmigration. The Sautrantika sect attempted to solve this problem by teaching that at one's death the seed of the new being remains alive. The Hosso sect

develops this method in an interesting way; two sense faculties are added to the psychical analysis of the Southern schools. The seventh faculty, known as the *Klishtamano-Vidjnana*, lies between the mind faculty of the Southern school and the eighth faculty known as *Alaya-Vidjnana*. It is called the source of all evil because it gives the impression that *Alaya* is a self. The *Alaya* is a receptacle-like faculty containing the seed of all existence. This makes the philosophy of this sect a form of individual idealism not unlike that of Berkeley. When Hiouen Thsang returned to China in 645 he brought with him the teachings of *Kusha* and the *Hosso* sects. In 653, 658, 703 and 716 A. D. these sects were carried to Japan by Japanese Buddhist scholars who had been studying in China.

3. *The True Mahayana Sects of Japan*

Just as Kant went below the controversy between the Empiricists of England and the Rationalists of Europe and produced a system of thought which surpassed both of the older systems, so the founder of Northern Buddhism in the doctrine of "The Middle Way," rose above the opposing schools of Southern Buddhism. But thought did not remain stationary; the Kantian system was followed by the Idealism of Schelling, Hegel and others. In the same way in the development of Buddhist thought, the middle path, as taught by *San-Ron* and *Hosso* sects, was a stage in the development of Absolute Idealism found in true Mahayana doctrine.

(a) *The Kegon or Avatamsaka Sutra Sect*. The *Kegon* sect was the first of the true Mahayana sects introduced to Japan in the age of Nara. This sect is founded upon the *Kegon* scripture which is surrounded by mystery and sanctity. According to tradition it was the first doctrine preached by S'akyamuni as he sat under the tree where he had been enlightened. By the same mysterious power

according to the sutra ² "all ages of the past are placed in the future and those of the future are turned to the past." And in this way it was possible for two of his future disciples to be present and hear his teaching. This scripture is the source of all his doctrines, but it proved to be too profound for ordinary men to understand. Therefore he gave up teaching it and resorted to the teaching of Southern Buddhism as a device until a more suitable time should come.

In the meantime, two texts of this sutra, the "Constant Text" and the "Great Text," were kept by mystic power of the saints and not put into writing. Two other texts are said to still remain in the Dragon's Palace under the sea. Fortunately in the second century A. D. Nagarjuna, one of the four founders of true Mahayana, took the "Lowest Text" and made the teaching known in India. In the beginning of the fifth century still another text, known as the "Abridged Text" was carried to China, where five great patriarchs first established the sect. The greatest contribution to this doctrine was given by five great priests of China; one of these, Genju Daishi, was so eloquent and had such a mysterious influence upon the people when he lectured on this sutra that they said: "There rained some wonderful heavenly flowers, and rays of white light issued from his mouth." In 736 A. D. Dosen, a distinguished Chinese priest, brought the teaching to Japan. Shortly afterward, when a Korean priest began a three-year course of lectures on its doctrines, "a purple cloud appeared over his head" and greatly influenced all present, including the Emperor Shomu, who was filled with admiration.

In the Middle Ages in Europe men used to argue about how many angels could stand on the point of a needle. In somewhat the same way Buddhist scholars claimed in explanation of the unwritten "Constant Text" of this

² See Nanjo, *A Short History of the Twelve Buddhist Sects*, pp. 57-65.

sutra that "even at the point of one grain of dust of immeasurable and unlimited worlds, there are innumerable Buddhas who are constantly preaching the Kegon scripture throughout the three worlds, so that the preaching is not at all to be collected." "

The Kegon sect classifies all other teachings into five which may be briefly described as follows: the teaching of Southern Buddhism, the teachings of Quasi-Mahayana, the teaching of the "Awakening of Faith in Mahayana," the teaching of the Zen sect, and finally the perfect teaching of the Kegon sect itself, which is the highest of all Buddhist teachings, though placed alongside of the Tendai.

According to Southern Buddhists, Buddha was an historical person who obtained enlightenment after a rather trying experience, and who spent the balance of his long life as a religious teacher. His followers regarded him as a great teacher whose body "did not exceed sixteen feet," that being the height of many of his statues in Japan. According to the Kegon and Tendai sects Buddha is not a man, but "The Absolute Law-Body" whose universal essence fills all existence. The Kegon scripture describes him as follows: "The Absolute Buddha (Dharmakaya), while manifesting itself in the triple world, is free from impurities and evil desires. It unfolds itself here, there, and everywhere, responding to the call of Karma." It is not an individual reality, it is not a false existence, but is universal and pure. It comes from nowhere, it goes to nowhere, it does not assert itself, nor is it subject to annihilation. It is forever serene and eternal. It is the One, devoid of determination. This body of Dharmakaya has no boundary, no quarters, but is embodied in all bodies. Its freedom and spontaneity is incomprehensible. All forms of corporeality are involved

³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴ Karma, "the inexorable, unescapable, impersonal principle of just moral retribution." Note also the definition given on page 27.

therein; it is able to create all things. Assuming any concrete material body, as required by the nature and condition of Karma, it illuminates all creation. Though it is the storehouse of intelligence it is void of particularity; there is no place in the universe where this Dharmakaya does not prevail. The universe becomes, but this remains forever. It is free from all opposites and contraries, yet it is working in all things to lead them to Nirvana." ⁵

The reality of the Absolute, as explained by Nagarjuna, is a reality of things by complete negation: "No birth, no death, no permanence, no extinction, no one, no many, no coming, no going." "To state generally what constitutes the deep meaning of Mahayana, it is emptiness. Those who attain to the doctrines of emptiness also thoroughly understand what Mahayana is; they realize the six virtues of perfection in their person; they know no impediments." ⁶ The reality of Northern Buddhism is thus impersonal and "empty" or unrelated. It is the "Great Indifference" of Schelling. From the standpoint of the Occidental, this mystical reality can scarcely be conceived of as differing from pure abstraction or even annihilation, even when one is assured that it is something real. It is like the Taoist "Way"; to describe it is to condition it. It is the "Unknowable" of the Scottish philosophy.

In the Hosso sect there developed a substitute for the self in the "Alaya Consciousness," ⁷ which resembled the "Seminal-Logos" of the Greeks in that it stored up the productive seeds of all existence and persisted even after the death of the individual, thus making possible the personal identity of the being who dies with his rebirth in another form. This new element became the connecting link between the reality of the passive Absolute and the

⁵ "The Avatamsaka Sutra," see *The Eastern Buddhist*, May, 1921, p. 64.

⁶ *Ibid.*, July, 1921, pp. 99-100.

⁷ *Alaya Vidjñāna*, Eitel's *Handbook of Chinese Buddhism*, p. 197.

world of change. In the Kegon and other Mahayana sects the necessity for an active Absolute is fully recognized, the essential self of the individual man becoming one with Buddha or the Absolute. According to this form of absolute idealism all things and the individual self are explained as melting into the Absolute which is all in all. Buddhist spiritual reality, like the Hindu conception of Brahma, bears a close resemblance to the God-soul in the universe. This universal essence is incarnated in the saints (Bodhisattva),⁸ who are superior beings filled with such universal sympathy with living beings that they voluntarily have renounced Nirvana in order to save them from the life of suffering to which they are bound. This development of the teaching of Mahayana Buddhism is very important, since it makes it possible for all living beings to coöperate in saving grace. It is thus summed up by Dr. Teitaro Suzuki in his *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*. "The essential difference of the doctrine of the Bodhisattva as distinguished from the other schools, consists in the belief that objects of the senses are merely phenomenal and have no absolute reality, that the indestructible Dharmakaya which is all pervading, constitutes the norm of existence, that all Bodhisattva are incarnations of Dharmakaya, who, not by their evil karma previously accumulated, but by their boundless love for all mankind assume corporeal existences, and that persons who thus appear in the flesh as avatars of the Buddha supreme, associate themselves with the masses in all possible social relations in order that they may thus lead them to a state of enlightenment."

It is interesting how many modern ideas may be deduced from the assumption that the nature of Buddha is incarnated in all things, animate and inanimate. To identify Buddha's nature with all things enables his merit or the merit acquired by any living being to be

⁸ Buddhist saints, who have only one more birth before entering Nirvana and losing their individuality.

turned to the benefit of all creatures. This resembles ideas familiar in the history of Christianity. The believers of two Buddhist sects, as will be seen, repeat the name of Amida for the benefit of others, a kind of intercession. Another modern deduction from this doctrine is the equality of all men. Therefore, in spite of the autocratic system of the Buddhist hierarchy, and her historic attitude, Buddhism claims to be essentially democratic.

According to Southern Buddhism Nirvana is a cessation from individual existence, which is regarded as only evil. Man is bound by the twelve-linked chain of causation and doomed to circulate in a whirlpool of transmigration from which he seeks redemption by long ages of penance and self-effort. Annihilation is the happy culmination of all his suffering.

According to the Kegon and other Mahayana sects Nirvana is not only the negative state of the extinguished flame of life, but becomes identical with the universal Buddha and Absolute Reality which, though still described as "empty," is regarded as possessing elements of permanence, happiness, selfhood and purity (*jo, raku, ga, jo*). In addition to Nirvana or Absolute Reality, most Mahayana sects teach the existence of a paradise and a purgatory, where those who have not yet attained Nirvana, but have escaped the bondage of transmigration, may dwell in happiness, shedding the light of their illustrious merit to assist poor living creatures out of the darkness and struggle of life.

(b) *The Tendai Sect.* In the early days of the ninth century there was a revival of interest in Mahayana doctrine in Japan when Dengyo Daishi, the founder of the Tendai sect, and Kobo Daishi, the founder of the Shingon sect, established themselves in Mt. Hiei and Mt. Koya respectively, immediately after their return from China. The Tendai sect is based upon the Hokke or Saddharma Pundarika sutra and contains all the strong points of Kegon idealism. Kegon doctrine was perhaps more

closely related to the Hosso sect, while Tendai may be more truly a development of the San-Ron. The three categories of San-Ron became the basis of the Tendai doctrine of three truths in one. This doctrine provides for a Buddhist Trinity which Buddhist devotees regard as having a very close resemblance to Christian doctrine. In the *Mission News* of December, 1917, a Buddhist priest points out that "The three bodies in Buddha respectively correspond to the three persons in God. . . . Let me show this by a diagram:

$$\text{GOD} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Father (Truth) Reason law-body} \\ \text{Spirit (Soul) Wisdom reward-body} \\ \text{Christ (Human God) feeling, human} \\ \text{Buddha, gross body} \end{array} \right\} \text{BUDDHA}$$

Now that the three-body idea of Buddhism and the Trinity of Christianity are the same, we should say that the object of worship and adoration is one and the same in the two religions." In the sixth century the Tendai sect was founded in China by Emon and Chisha Daishi. In order to relate their doctrine to Indian Buddhism they have to resort to much mystical tradition. Even more than the Kegon doctrine, that of the Tendai sect is indebted to Chinese philosophy. In Japan it has greatly developed, and in this modern age it has been almost transformed by Western idealism.

The Tendai sect instead of dividing the teachings of S'akyamuni into five grades divides his life of forty-nine years of service into five periods, naming each period after the particular scripture which they suppose was taught as a preparation for the absolute idealism of Tendai doctrine. The orthodox Buddhist regards these periods as historical. This evolution of Buddhist theology is illustrated in the *Saddharma Pundarika* scripture by a beautiful story about a prodigal son. It runs as follows:

A certain youth fled into a far country where poverty and distress overtook him, so he resolved to return to the

shelter and rest of his father's home. During his absence, however, his father had become wealthy and was now living in a rich palace with many retainers and servants. He never ceased to long for his lost son to share his fortune and kept thinking: "How pleasant it would be to give my wealth to my son."

One day while he was thus musing his son came home and stood at the gate watching him; but seeing the magnificence of the place and the many Brahmans, retainers and servants, and not recognizing his father in the person of this wealthy man, he said to himself: "This is no place for me, standing at the gate of such a great prince; I may be forced to do some labor." He was starting on his way when his father recognized him as his son and sent a retainer to call him back. The poor man was alarmed; when they tried to take him he cried out: "I have done nothing worthy of arrest," and fell fainting on the ground. The father himself brought cold water to revive him; but although he was convinced that the poor wreck of a man was indeed his lost son, he saw that he was totally unfit to share his exalted position and did not reveal himself. He ordered his servant to release the youth and to allow him to go where he wished. The poor prodigal, delighted, immediately sought food and shelter in the poorest quarters of the city.

This experience illustrates the Keron period when, according to tradition, S'akyamuni taught the doctrine of absolute idealism, as it is understood to-day in the Keron sect, for twenty-one days before he discovered that people could not understand his teaching. Like the father, the Buddha was eager to welcome all men, but the prodigal's attitude paralleled that of the poor ignorant masses who could not understand the merciful heart of the all-present Buddha parent, and were seeking they knew not what.

The tradition goes on to say that the father was ever longing to save his son and later sent two servants poorly

dressed, so as not to alarm him, to tell the youth that at his old home there was a great opportunity to earn a living, and to lead him back there. So eager and full of pity was the father that he dressed himself in rags and went to his son. He assured the youth that he would increase his wages and give him his heart's desire. He urged him to be at ease, commended him for his honesty and purity, and begged him to regard himself as a son, not a servant. The youth then began to feel more at home, yet for years he continued to live in his straw hut. This experience represented the Agon stage of twelve years during which S'akyamuni taught the Southern Buddhism of the Agon (Ayama) sutras. The Buddha he represented was a miserable-looking, suffering man, kind and interested in man, but merely a man.

Gradually the son came to feel at home; he admired the palace, but did not think of it as related to himself. One day his father became ill and seemed about to die. He called for the youth and said: "I am sick and wish to bestow my riches on someone who will take care of them. I give them to you, for I know you will take care of them as I have done." After that the youth took charge of everything, but did not feel that the property was his own. He did not use anything for himself, but continued to live in his straw hut as before. This experience illustrated the progress toward Buddhahood in the Hodo (Vaipulya) period and in the Hannya (Prajnaparamita) period, when for thirty years in all people struggled to attain Buddhahood but were not yet enlightened. They were on the way to Nirvana.

Not long after this, knowing he was about to die, and perceiving the great things that had taken place in his son's heart, the father determined to present him as his long lost son to a gathering of relatives. He said to them: "This is my own son who disappeared; to him I bequeath all my estate, public and private." The straw hut was at last abandoned, and the prodigal came to live

in his own luxurious home. This experience represented the stage of "Saddharma Pundarika," in which believers grasp the full deep meaning of Buddhahood. This is the last and highest stage in the attainment of Buddhist wisdom.

This curious parable suggests the continuity of all Buddhist teaching from that of Southern Buddhism up to the Absolute Idealism of true Mahayana doctrine. Interpreted in the light of modern scholarship, this idealism is presented by Buddhist scholars in a form resembling that of the Neo-Hegelian scholars. In some respects the Tendai sect developed beyond the teaching of Kegon. It represents the historic Buddha as the incarnation of the Absolute Buddha sent to save men from suffering and sin. Like a great father, the Incarnate Buddha says to all men: "Ye are my sons. . . . Just as the sun rises over the world, first glorifying the highest mountain peaks, then the highest hills, then the foothills, and finally flooding the plain with light, so the limitless wisdom of the incarnate Buddha sends forth the light of unlimited and unobstructed wisdom upon all men who possess the merit of a previously good character, and finally upon all classes of men, good and bad alike."

The Tendai sect makes a much more popular appeal than the Kegon sect. It emphasizes purity of body, speech and thought; the necessity for good behavior; the possibility of collecting and retaining the merits of good deeds; and the practice of the six perfections, charity, morality, patience, energy, contemplation and wisdom, which are regarded as the six essential virtues of a Buddhist saint. All believers are exhorted to manifest mercy and benevolence toward all living creatures. Such conduct is the beginning of Buddhahood in which all evil passions and ignorance are overcome.

Meditation is emphasized as a way of attaining triumphant entrance to the Buddha land. Believers must meditate on the misery of all living things, on the imperma-

nence of existence, which is as fleeting as a bubble. In this way the world and its attractions will become as a mirror or as empty as an echo. Human nature will be suppressed and men will be led to grasp the unity of all truth and the meaning of all existence by overcoming ignorance and lust. Strengthening the will by Buddha's grace, giving up all worldly ambitions, relying only on Buddha, and walking according to divine reason, men may become enlightened and enjoy the wisdom of the absolute.

(c) *The Shingon Sect.* The Tendai and the Kegon sects, which represent the highest idealism in Buddhist philosophy, are valued for their philosophy rather than for their religious appeal to the people. Ordinary people cannot understand their teaching. To meet the real religious needs of the people the Shingon sect had a special mission. Its teaching may be called secret or esoteric, as opposed to that of other sects which are designated as open or exoteric. It is very highly mystical and intuitional, a fact which makes it of peculiar interest to the student of comparative religion.

In the early days of the eighth century several disciples of the new secret (Yoga) learning came to China from India. So pleased was the emperor of China with their mystic teachings that they were ordered to translate "the law of reading and reciting the Yoga doctrine." This teaching was declared to have originated in India in the second century and to have been received from a mysterious "iron tower." In the ninth century Kobo Daishi, having been consecrated by the sprinkling of water on his head, received the secret teaching from Chinese scholars and carried it to Japan.

The open or exoteric teaching about Buddhism was given by S'akyamuni and gradually modified, as noted above, to meet the needs of the intelligence of the people of his day. Hence the exoteric teaching was called "following the will of the people." The esoteric teaching of

Shingon represents absolute truth as perceived by the universal Buddha. It is said to have been first given by revelation to a disciple who was prepared to receive it, with instructions to preserve it carefully and secretly until a Buddhist saint capable of grasping its profound meaning should appear. Several centuries later, Nagarjuna, retiring to the "iron tower," received in a trance the baptism of initiation from a Buddhist of the Yoga-Carya school. This secret teaching is not modified by any human device or situation but is given by intuition or in communion with the Absolute. Hence it is known as teaching "according to the will of the Absolute."

The open exoteric teaching of Buddhism found expression in the teachings of S'akyamuni and is transmitted through the explanation and interpretation of them. It regards reality as inexplicable and incomprehensible. Its effect on people is naturally limited by their capacity to express or understand it.

Kobo Daishi, explaining the esoteric or secret teaching, distinguishing two kinds of secrets: the secret unity of all living beings with the universal Buddha, and the enlightenment of the universal Buddha himself which is secret from men. Scholars say also that there are words which have a deep secret meaning, and there are secrets understood by Buddha only and revealed to man only when he enters into mystical union with the Buddha. Secret doctrine is transmitted through allegory and symbol; every word or act, even the various devotional methods of holding the hands, is laden with mystic meaning. The greatest contribution of this esoteric teaching is to represent the spiritual energy of the Absolute as flowing into all beings, hidden to all except the initiated; according to it this energy of the Absolute is very active in the salvation of men. From a human standpoint, it is a spiritual presence working in the hearts of men for their salvation, impressing itself upon their "mouths, minds, and bodies" and enabling them to enter enlightenment during

life. The mouth represents words; the mind, thought; the body, conduct. Outwardly these are three works, but when united with the mystic presence of Buddha's mouth, mind and body, they become three mysterious spiritual values. This Shingon teaching which the believers hold, adding the power of Buddha to their own, is consistently and logically pantheistic, explaining all existence by the six elements—earth, water, fire, air, knowledge and the void. These six elements are discovered in reality, and the each of them all the others are involved. In Shingon thinking the personified Buddhas stand between the Absolute and the world, but the Absolute includes all existence. The world is described by two pictures of one reality representing the male and the female, or matter and mind, as phases of reality. In some ways this Shingon teaching resembles Spinoza's pantheism. Its strong mystical and magical tendencies have made much of various charms, magic words, and occult forms and ceremonies to be used for the benefit of the living or the dead; these tend to obscure the true philosophical elements of its teaching.

VII

SOCIAL IDEALS OF BUDDHISM

1. *Modern Buddhism and Democracy*

A certain priest named Senkan was once returning from a much coveted audience with the emperor of Japan. Dressed in his gorgeous ceremonial robes he rode proudly along. On the way he overtook an old monk dressed in rags and pulling a cart on which was an image of the Goddess of Mercy, and repeating in a loud voice his Buddhist prayer. Many children were following the old man, so that the curiosity of Senkan was aroused. When upon inquiry he was informed that the old monk was the famous Kuya, he hastened to alight from his carriage and ask for the favor of an interview: "My name is Senkan. Would you mind telling me something about the gateway to salvation?" The old monk looked at him and carelessly replied: "I do not know anything about it. You are more profound than I in such matters." Senkan became more earnest: "I do not mean theories. I want to know the road to deliverance, which is the essential point of Buddhism." Perceiving that Senkan was really in earnest, Kuya replied: "Then give yourself up." Greatly moved, Senkan immediately threw off his gorgeous attire and, handing it to his attendants, sent it back to the temple, while he joined Kuya, and together they continued their pilgrimage. Senkan learned that the mercy of Amida, the Buddha of measureless light and life, had saved him. To prove his gratitude to Amida he henceforth gave himself freely to the service of his people,

sometimes assisting them with their boats, often with their packhorses, or in any way that seemed necessary.

This story illustrates the difference between the true spirit of Buddhism and that of the gorgeously dressed priests of the Tokugawa age, who were often condemned as mere consumers, making little or no contribution to society. To-day Buddhist priests quite frequently talk "democracy." But the Buddhist hierarchy appears to be quite as autocratic and despotic as that of the Roman Church. Buddhist priests desire the franchise, even though in their system similar privileges are not usually extended to laymen. Historically they can show many instances of great priests whose lives and conduct resembled that of the two priests in the story just related. Even S'akyamuni and his disciples dressed in rags and begged their way. The modern presentation of democracy from a Buddhist point of view is¹ rather striking. The director of the Buddhist Mission in Hawaii gives at least three arguments in its favor: (1) It is based on the law of causation which prevails in nature and spirit alike. According to this law "every sentient being is held responsible for his thoughts and deeds." This idea of responsibility produces a sense of justice and a feeling of sympathy for all beings who stand together on a basis of equality, because "they are all moral beings." (2) Buddhism recognizes only one principle which unifies all things, refusing to admit such distinctions as "matter and consciousness, body and mind, *meum* and *tuum*, God and man, the Creator and the creatures." All human suffering arises from such distinctions as "I" and "not I." All barriers are broken down in which this universal essence or Buddhahood extends to plants and things, all of which have the possibility of Buddhahood. (3) From the standpoint of the True Sect of the Pure Land, all people are children of Amida's mercy, and are "brothers, friends, and

¹ *Democracy According to the Buddhist Viewpoint*, by Y. Imamura, 1918, pp. 6-10.

comrades in faith." Even Shinran Shonin, the great founder of the sect, called his disciples comrades and recorded all beings as "his parents and blood relations," and his wife as "the incarnation of a holy being," worthy of respect and love, making the center of his religious life the home, which is the base of society, the source of all sound morality. This is because Amida "embraces all in his infinite love and mercy. Love is infinite, faith is absolute, and this is where all sentient beings meet on a basis of equality."

Director Imamura, however, logically destroyed the force of these arguments when he reacted to the fundamental Buddhist point of view that,² "taken individually, thought is taxed to the utmost to effect the unification of opposites. But from the height of Buddha-nature that knows no limiting horizons, autocracy and democracy are of one value and stand on the same level; for even such contrasts as nature and man, self and non-self, flesh and spirit, one and many, have no place in the Buddha-nature, but are so completely reconciled that each performs its natural and proper function without intruding upon the others." This is not reconciliation, but rather absorption, which is the only possible conclusion from an impersonal Buddha-nature. It logically and forcefully destroys all social and moral standards. Only personal and individual unity is a suitable and, at the same time, an absolute basis for democracy and ethics.

2. *Social Service*

Buddhist leaders frequently remark: "Christianity to-day does not lay so much stress upon creeds as upon social relief and practical forms of work." This keen observation has greatly influenced Buddhism in its modern propaganda. Its proponents seem to say: "Let dead creeds and past superstitions become mere devices for ignorant people, but modern Buddhism must compete with

² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Christianity in social work." Social work, however, is not entirely foreign to the history of Buddhism. *An Outline of Social Work in Japan*, issued by the ³ Home Department of the government, records the greatest activity of Buddhism in this sphere during the eighth century, when her imperial devotees established orphanages for famine sufferers, homes for foundlings and widows, hospitals for the blind, and free medical dispensaries for the poor. But apart from the temple schools, organized work for society was scarcely worthy of notice from the ninth down to the nineteenth century. Most of the benevolent work done in the Tokugawa age was organized under Confucian auspices; and when the "Great Age of Enlightenment" under the late Emperor Meiji was ushered in, very few social institutions were found to be in existence. Not only was this true, but Buddhism was so demoralized that it did not quickly develop such institutions. In the great famine of ⁴ Mikage prefecture, when many people were made destitute, Buddhist mercy remained passive until after Christian love had organized relief. During the great China famine similar conditions prevailed, but fortunately in the famine of 1920 the Japanese-Chinese Business Society gave generous assistance.

At the present time a great change is taking place. Buddhists are laying more stress upon practical work for the common good. The Nichiren movement, basing its appeal upon nationalistic principles and the great work of Nichiren on "Giving peace to the country," has stimulated a revival of practical work. According to *A General View of the Religious Situation in Japan*, issued by the Department of Education in 1920, forty-five million Buddhists, during 1918, maintained three hundred and sixteen institutions including nurseries, kindergartens, orphanages, homes for ex-prisoners and schools. On the other hand, according to the same report, less than two hundred thou-

³ In 1922.

⁴ See *Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom*, by Dr. DeForest.

sand Christians, coöperating with the missionaries and with the outside support they represent, maintained four hundred and twenty-nine such institutions.

The great Asakusa Temple of Kwannon issues for the benefit of tourists an English pamphlet describing its work. We quote the following extract: "The principal affairs of the Kwannon (Goddess of Mercy) Hall are the daily and monthly services and prayers, which are all undertaken from our heartfelt desire to realize in ourselves the love and truth of Kwannon; for when this is manifested in all purity and sincerity, the world where we live will be a kingdom of Kwannon Bosatsu. Japanese Buddhists all pray for this kingdom to come, not only to this country of ours, but to the entire world under any pretext whatever. At the Hall of the Young Men's (Buddhist) Association sermons or lectures are delivered several times a month, while at the dispensary back of the Kwannon Hall over one hundred and fifty patients are daily treated free." The Pure Land sect organized a coöperative relief association for laborers in the factory for the manufacture of gauze and absorbent cotton. Unfortunately this factory was destroyed by earthquake and fire.

The Shingon sect, which is sufficiently progressive to exchange lectures with a Christian college in western Japan, has issued a pamphlet to its members on "The Temple and Social Work," which pointed out that the purpose for which temples are built is to worship Buddha and save mankind, saying: "Consequently, a temple cannot be true to itself, unless it does something beside propagate its doctrines." It expresses the desire to use every room in the temple for some good purpose for the public. "Some contend that to do so is to desecrate the temple," but the pamphlet urges "people to remember that a temple's mission makes it a place for presenting offerings to ancestors, to dispense to the poor, and to do some educational work." Buddhists of all sects endeavor to assist ex-prisoners, and many priests of the True Sect of the

Pure Land are chaplains in prisons. But this Shingon pamphlet urges the various temples "to adopt such forms of social work as are suited to the educational and social standards of the abbot in charge, the expenses to be provided either from the funds of the temple (if the chief priest have the right spirit and sufficient endowment), or by the coöperative efforts of all the temples in the district, or by monthly contributions of members of the various Buddhist Associations, prompted by their faith and ardent love for man." It also advises that they coöperate with the Young Men's Association, the Ladies National Patriotic Society, and the Returned Soldiers' Society.

Some temples provide rooms for women from crowded districts who are about to be confined, and insure proper care for both mother and child; temples are also urged to supply nurse girls and milk for such children. They also include in their program day nurseries, Sunday schools, meetings for parents and children, at which by lantern or cinematograph and story they may be made familiar with the words and deeds of the saints and be induced to lead a religious life. Bureaus for consultation and advice, for employment, for reconciliation may be found; also there are night schools under Buddhist management. "The object is to let the people feel the blessing which flows from our warm hearts, saving them from pain and suffering, and giving them the joy and peace which alone comes from physical and spiritual salvation. It is the will of Buddha, as well as the demand of modern society, that we religionists should carry out social work. It is our responsibility to save them from hunger and suffering and lead them to the right, to have sympathy with the lonely, to educate the ignorant, to promote common welfare, bringing peace and order into society, and happiness to men."

3. *The Modern Attitude Toward Women*

In none of its ideals has Buddhism changed so much as

in its attitude toward women. An ancient writer reflects the typical Buddhist conception when he describes a mother nursing her child as one of the saddest possible sights; this was the conception of woman as the instrument of introducing man into the "sea of birth and death." One ancient priest called her "the messenger of hell." One scripture not only condemns woman, but also the man who cohabits or lives with her. Even the best scripture taught that "no woman can enter Paradise." Amida's vow could save women only on condition that "she despise her womanly nature" and be born as a man." Modern Buddhists find it necessary to try to explain away all such passages and teachings, and they are making a real place for women in their organizations. One Tokyo temple has issued a small pamphlet of rules for "Buddhist Ladies' Societies." In the preamble it describes the aim of one of these organizations to be "to make clear how women may become good women and good housewives." The society is not so religious as a similar Christian organization would be; it attempts rather to teach household economy, hygiene, and sanitation; its avowed object is "to exalt the virtue of women and give them knowledge and training in some arts necessary to life. Such a society holds an annual meeting in addition to monthly meetings and special lectures, and classes for domestic arts and social service.⁵

A certain woman wrote to a Buddhist magazine, expressing her desire to cut off her hair and devote her life to contemplation, and asked for instructions. The editor replied that it was not necessary to shave her head. He said: "As a woman, by adapting yourself to your environment and observing the common duties, the foundation for contemplation is laid. However, for one fleeing from the world, the devil of worry will be found in the way, and

⁵ Thirty-fourth vow.

⁶ For these pamphlets on Modern Buddhism the author was indebted to a friendly young Buddhist, Mr. J. Furukawa.

it will be necessary to fight, and drive him away." The same magazine came out strongly and clearly against concubinage. A Shingon⁷ writer says that women are made up of the same elements as man and are equally open to salvation. Priests of the True Sect of Pure Land, rising above Amida's thirty-fourth vow, declare that the mercy of Amida is great enough to save women.

These progressive ideas which have recently developed in Japanese Buddhism spring largely from contact with modern civilization and competition with Christianity. These two influences have brought about two distinct movements. One called "Living Buddhism" was championed by the late Dr. Enryo Inoue who discovered points of contact with Western science and philosophy. The other movement, which represents a changed attitude toward Christianity and Christian work, has earnestly imitated all Christian methods of work. Both movements recognize clearly the need of radical reforms and have attempted to bring them about. Of the two movements the latter is probably more spiritual. At present the movement for reform is very strong among the Pure Land sects. The leaders exalt the teachings of Shinran Shonin and urge that Buddhists renounce errors. The effect within Buddhism has been very beneficial, developing a better type of propaganda, inaugurating a large amount of practical social work and raising the educational and ethical standards of the priests.

4. *Buddhist Priests*

Baron Kato, ex-president of the Imperial University, Tokyo, once criticized the Buddhist priests in a remarkable way. He said: "The priests are indeed a rotten set, and they themselves are in the greatest need of reformation. They are absolutely unable to save the masses and are moreover a peril to society. It is a sad and grave question how to deal with them. Of course, their corruption is

⁷ Rev. Gonda Raifu.

not a child of to-day; it is the accumulation of ages and has reached the climax now." ⁸ Dr. Kato did not favor Christianity; in fact he greatly feared its influence upon national life. In comparing it with Buddhist influences he said: "Christianity is very different. There are bad religious leaders among Christians, but it is marvelous to note the zeal of the majority of them. Christian doctrines are hardly worth looking at, but the men who propagate them are good and helpful to society. The prime thing in religion is the men who uphold it, not the religion they uphold. Our priests of to-day are evil fellows, and the damage they are doing to society cannot be condoned." Such criticisms are quite common; it is frequently said that, since the priesthood has become hereditary with a living assured, many remain in the sacred office for the sake of the living, though they have scant faith in their own doctrines. They encourage people to purchase useless charms and to practice superstitions in a way which should be impossible for intelligent educated men, such as many priests are becoming at the present time.

In some sects, however, earnest-minded reformers are at work trying to bring about a better state of affairs. The Shingon sect describes the mission of the priest as twofold: the spreading of religious propaganda, and social service. They say: "Modern society is in both spiritual and physical chaos, full of restlessness and agitation. Dangerous thoughts, which may take advantage of the weakness of society, are to be feared. The priests ought to assist the government at this time of crisis to realize the welfare of the country. Ancient priests were not merely lip-servers, they worked for Japan; therefore we ought to be truthful and courageous enough to fight a good fight for the good of society. . . . There are a great many things our government is too busy to do, and it expects us religionists to do them, and some things are better done by us. Therefore we should rise with great

⁸ *Sunrise and the Sunrise Kingdom.*

determination and help the government, doing our best for the benefit of society and mankind. This is our mission at the present moment." This illustrates very well the patriotic appeal to the priests. In country places, and especially where their living is at stake, the belief that it may be endangered is a powerful weapon against progress. But in an increasingly large number of cases educated men are sincerely studying the religious problems of to-day and are looking forward to the day when the almost hopeless system shall be reformed, somewhat as Catholic Christianity was affected at the time of the Protestant Reformation.

5. *Needed Changes*

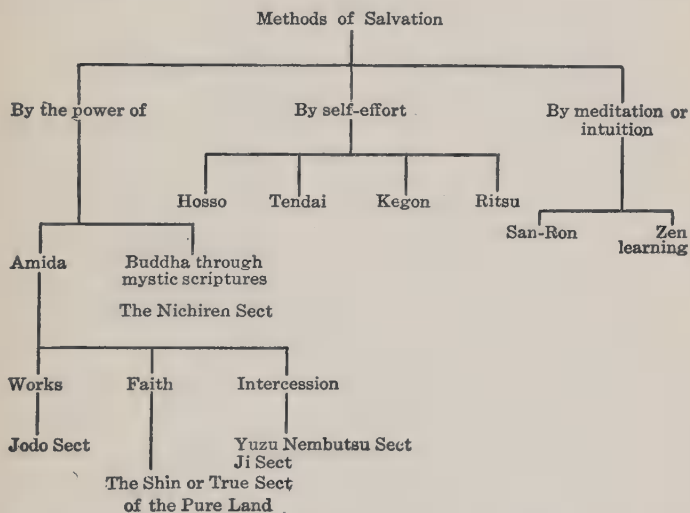
The real difficulties in Buddhism are deep rooted. Its philosophical pantheism and its religious appeal are non-moral. In an inquiry or discussion meeting at the close of a lecture on "Buddhism and Christianity" a teacher asked: "Is not the mercy of Amida, which saves without any moral condition, greater than the love of Christ, which requires 'works worthy of repentance'?" That question reveals the secret of the weakness of modern Buddhism. In nearly all sects the priests disregard the historic doctrine of Buddhism; they have wives and eat that which has been killed. No external treatment can bring about the desired reform; it must come from within. A few years ago Dr. Inoue of the Imperial University, Tokyo, writing in *The Light of Asia*, very cleverly summed up the reforms which must take place in Buddhism before it can take its place as a world religion. He described the reading of Buddhist scriptures as "a murmuring and humming of tedious nonsense. Some of it the priests themselves do not understand and, of course, it is foolish to impose these enigmas on the people. Buddhism was brought to birth in pessimistic India. The former miserable state of that country was due to this religion, and only the national optimism of the Japanese people has

protected them from similar injurious consequences. Nevertheless, to it we owe the deplorable custom of love suicide. Before the Indian religion was imported the world looked beautiful to the Japanese. A realistic and optimistic people as they are cannot be satisfied with a Buddhist view of life. . . . Its doctrines and prejudices are inconsistent with advanced thought. Its morals have not kept pace with Japanese social progress, indeed practical moral ideas are not conspicuous in Buddhism." We must add to these objections two others. As stated previously, many Buddhist priests nourish the superstitions of the people for the sake of their own living. For example, thousands of people rub their diseased parts on the corresponding parts of the image of the God of Medicine for their healing, although every modern priest knows it is a filthy, unsanitary practice; and crowds of people pay money to have their fortunes told by certain priests. In the second place, Buddhist philosophy at times touches the highest peaks of German idealism, but this result is obtained by the elimination of life and relativity; it points "empty reality," a pure subjectivity, which is a mere abstraction, a refined myth growing out of the "great void" in which the unborn Brahma was conceived to exist. Once Buddhism has been subjected to historical criticism, most of its modern progress will be understood to have grown out of its competition with "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

VIII

PRACTICAL BUDDHIST SECTS

Buddhist sects may also be classified from the standpoint of their methods of salvation as follows:



In a former chapter the leading philosophical sects have been briefly outlined; it only remains to discuss the more practical and consequently more popular sects of Buddhism. Of these the Shin or True Sects of the Pure Land and the Nichiren sect are of especial importance, because they are the most popular and represent Buddhist doctrine which is the indigenous product of Japanese people. During the thirteenth century a great wave of religious awak-

ening took place under the able leadership of men like Honen Shonin, Shinran Shonin, who taught salvation through Amida, and Nichiren Shonin who is spoken of as a Buddhist prophet. This revival produced something new in the history of Buddhism and made a contribution to the preparation for Christian thought which is growing in importance even to-day.

1. *The Zen Sect*

The Zen sect might be classified among the theoretical divisions of Buddhism described in Chapter VI, but because of the stress laid by its votaries upon practicing the presence of the Absolute, it may more truly be placed as one of the more practical sects. It traces its origin from an incident in the life of S'akyamuni. On one occasion Brahma offered a yellow flower to the Buddha requesting him to teach the law. Buddha silently held it up before his assembled disciples. Only one disciple, Kasyapa, smiled. Then the Buddha said to him: "I have the wonderful thought of Nirvana, the eye of the right law, which I will now give to you." After Kasyapa there followed twenty-seven patriarchs to whom the law was transmitted by intuition. The twenty-eighth patriarch was Bodhi Dharma, who came to China in 520 A. D. and, after meeting the king, sat cross-legged with his face toward the wall for nine years, practicing meditation. Afterward he made a great many disciples who were divided into Northern and Southern schools. The Southern school was soon divided into five sects. The teachings of the Northern school were first transmitted to Japan by Dosen in 729 A. D. The teachings of the Rinzai sect and the Soto sect of Southern Zen were transmitted to Japan in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by two famous priests, Eisai and Dogen respectively. A third sect, the Obaku, was introduced in Japan by a Chinese priest in the seventeenth century.

It is impracticable within brief limits, and really unnec-

essary, to outline these various sects. They all emphasize the psychical element of religious meditation. The Rinzai sect is quite original and unconventional in its methods of awakening men from religious indifference. Its advocates say "teach men the truth, even if it makes them angry. Kick the pillow from a sleeping man's head and he will give you immediate attention." One story will illustrate their method. A temple official called on Ikkyu, a famous Zen priest, and asked: "Are there such places as heaven and hell?" The priest immediately began to abuse the official: "You are a fool; you have an important position connected with the temple, yet you do not know whether there is heaven or hell. You are probably a fool, receiving your living from the temple, but ignorant of its teachings. You are a robber, a mere brute, living to eat. You are no Samurai." As the speaker heaped abuse upon abuse, the color rose in the face of the official. He was a man of honor; he refused to take such abuse even from a priest. He drew his sword, his passion rising with the act: "Your language, priest, is too abusive. I am a knight; why do you call me a thief and a fool? Explain yourself, or I will cut you down." The priest who had retired to a safe distance, clapped his hands and exclaimed: "Did you ask about hell? Your mind is hell; I see hell in your face. Ha! Ha!" The official was conscience-stricken. He said, "I understand," and they sat down amicably by the brazier. "Now," said the priest, "your mind is heaven." The official then asked, "How can I learn the great secret of Buddhism?" The priest replied in typical Zen language: "The secret of Buddhism is the shaved portion of a pain, the beard on a stone, the rustling of the bamboo in a picture, etc."

The most attractive custom in the Zen sect is the practice of Zazen, which is a method of sitting in meditation. It is of special value as a means toward a mental spiritual culture which gives poise and self-control to the believer. There are several ways of sitting properly in meditation:

(1) The believer sits with his right foot above his left knee and his left hand on his right palm; or (2) the left foot may be on the right knee and the right hand on the left palm; or (3) the feet may be brought up on opposite knees and the left hand and the right hand with the thumbs parallel. A Zen priest says: "Sometimes when one is looking at a straw, it becomes a Buddha; and sometimes an image of Buddha becomes a straw." The method, though important, is not so important as the end to be attained, viz. to perfect all law and attain enlightenment.

The physical and mental preparation for meditation is important. A man must be temperate in all things, but especially in eating. His body must be perfectly pure and clean, his tongue on the roof of his mouth, his lips tightly compressed, his eyes open, his breathing regular and deep. His mental preparation demands a separation between good and evil thought. He gives up all mental effort. If he thinks, he thinks of the unreality of self and the fleeting nature of all things. Concentrating his mind, his heart is flooded with the mercy of Buddha and he loses all attachment; his soul is filled with peace.

Speaking generally, Zen, with its emphasis upon sitting in meditation, is most subtle and psychical in its aims and results. It has made a great contribution to the ancient military ethical code of Japan. It contributed those stoical characteristics with which the more cultured classes are credited. The teachings of Zen are difficult to describe. They represent the unity of the individual with the Absolute Buddha, so that all relativity is lost in a mystical experience which supersedes all teaching. On one occasion the teacher of Dharma, the founder of the sect, was invited to an ancestral memorial feast to give the guests some of his teaching. To the great surprise of his royal host he did not read the scripture. When asked for a reason he said: "The breath I draw does not receive any influence from the material world, nor does the breath I exhale produce any effect on things; this is my daily

scripture. I do not read especially for you; I read it constantly every day. Since my heart and body are always with Buddha, sleeping, waking or working, I am constantly receiving his influence. My breath is his doctrine." This way of describing the divine presence reminds us of the Pauline teaching about God "in whom we live and move and have our being."

2. *Jodo or the Pure Land Sect*

The central object of worship in all Pure Land sects is Amida, the Buddha of measureless light and life. Tradition tells of a fabled being, who, after long ages of struggle, was just about to lose his individuality in Nirvana, but renounced this peace and chose the Western Paradise as his own, taking a vow to save all who would call upon his name. This Western Paradise is described as a place where even Buddhas would delight to dwell. By repeating "Hail, Amida Buddha" without ceasing, men expect to be enabled to enter this haven of light and to be freed from the world of darkness and suffering.

In China this Pure Land teaching became widely accepted between the fourth and seventh centuries A. D., under the leadership of several great Chinese priests. In Japan this same teaching, which had been already transmitted from China and had developed several saintly priests, was systematized and organized into a sect in the twelfth century by Honen Shonin, who was without exception one of the noblest products of Buddhism Japan has ever known. Honen felt that older forms of Buddhism had degenerated; that the believers were insincere and were not making progress in the Way. The conditions of the time greatly affected them; and, priests though they were, they had adopted the sword and the iron fist in order to enforce their will, even upon the emperor himself. Honen saw the necessity of a religious revival and set aside the older teaching because it was so abstruse and

difficult. He exhorted men everywhere to call upon Amida, with the result that Buddhism revived and the people were nourished. Dr. Anesaki says of Honen and his work: "Conversions took place in masses; conversions of nobles and courtiers, amazed by the sudden decline of court splendor; of the military men, disgusted with their barbarous pursuits; of the common people, long since dissatisfied with the mere outward forms of religion. His saintly personality with the simple gospel message of salvation was indeed a revelation of the serene light issuing from the Western Pure Land of bliss."

Honen Shonin pointed out five ways in which the repetition of Amida's name was of more value than the older methods of promoting Buddhism: (1) Amida communes with those who possess his vow in their hearts, and not with others. (2) Since Amida desires men to repeat his name, those who do so draw near to him, while those who neglect to do so, are far from him. (3) Faithful followers of Amida call upon him at all times without ceasing; others do so at intervals only. (4) Believers do not need to offer the merit of works through Amida if they repeat his name. (5) The ideal way of attaining Paradise is the repetition of his name; all other methods are impure. Those who practice this way of salvation are freed from fear at once, while those who follow the older way of religion struggle along in a constant state of fear and uncertainty.

Other sects tended to make a sharp distinction between priests and laymen, and between men and women. Many men felt it was important to separate from the world in order to practice religious work. This involved the destruction of the home and the loss of the priest and of his influence as a citizen. It carried with it a view of humanity and the world which was very pessimistic. In Honen's gospel no such separation was required, since Amida in his infinite mercy had already performed his religious austerities for ages, and had accumulated such merits that

in Paradise he is able to save all living beings who call upon his name.

There are two ways of looking upon Amida, just as there are two ways of regarding God. The rational mind describes God as the Absolute; the devotee thinks of him as a personal Father. So the Amida of reason is the Absolute, the universal Buddha or the "Great Indifference." The Amida of practical religious life is a spiritual personality, the Savior of mankind. In a similar way Paradise is explained; there is the paradise within, experienced in the heart of the believer; and there is the objective paradise, situated in the West, which no doubt, sometime, somewhere, probably in Persia, referred to the setting sun. The paradise of the Western Pure Land resembles the Greek idea of the Isles of Blest which Pindar has described as

Peaceful and happy by night and by day
Far away in the glorious west.

Tennyson describes Ulysses as saying to his friends:

For my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the Western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles
And see the great Achilles whom we knew.

3. *Intercessory Pure Land Sects*

There are two sects of the Pure Land which emphasize intercession, the Yuzu Nembutsu sect, founded by Ryonin, and the Ji sect, founded by Ippen Shonin. These sects were the immediate forerunner of the Shin or True Sect of Pure Land doctrine. In the twelfth century Ryonin lived and worked; he taught that the merit of calling upon the name of Amida was not merely selfish, but helped other men. He had repeated the name of Amida sixty thousand times a day for his own benefit; but on a day in 1117 A. D. he fell into a strange trance in which

Amida appeared to him and said: "That you have practiced religious austerities for a long time is commendable; but, notwithstanding all your effort, when you die you will not immediately enter paradise. I will teach you the melting and flowing repetition of Amida's name (Yuzu Nembutsu)." Ryonin gradually realized that, based upon the principle of race solidarity, one work is all work, one man is all men, and the merit of one passes to others. He began to travel and founded a sect which emphasized the fact that the merit of our work blends with the merit of that of others in obtaining salvation.

The Ji sect resembles this in condemning as selfish the personal desire for paradise. A man who gives up the world to be born in paradise is prompted by impure motives. In order to obtain true peace of mind one must earn merit for all. Believers must repeat the name of Amida without thinking of themselves. They must put away all selfishness when they call upon Amida.

Ippen Shonin, the founder of Ji, was called to the priesthood in boyhood, just as Samuel was. Later he was attracted by the teaching of Amida and prayed for special power to do evangelistic work. He visited China where he saw two pictures which greatly impressed him and influenced both his faith and conduct. The true way was represented as lying on a narrow ridge between fire on one side and water on the other. In the rear S'akyamuni was admonishing all men to walk on the narrow way, and in front Amida was beckoning them forward. If a man hesitated he was in danger from wild beasts. This picture impressed upon Ippen man's inability to arouse himself without Amida's help. The other picture revealed to him his own unsatisfactory position. It represented a man hanging over a precipice on which wild beasts stood ready to devour him if he ascended, while below a dragon lay ready to catch him if he descended. At the same time a white mouse, representing day, and a black one, representing night, were continually gnawing at the rope. For

three years he gave himself with closed eyes to calling on Amida for salvation. He finally concluded that since Amida, having performed religious austerities during long ages for all men, enabled men by one act of faith to enter Paradise, then even evil man, regardless of race, may enjoy this enlightening experience. His conclusion was verified in a trance by a godlike being who said: "Just as the beautiful lotus rises out of the mud, so by one act of enlightenment Amida saves all men."

4. *The Shin or True Sect of Pure Land*

Shinran Shonin, the founder of the Shin sect, was of noble birth, being related to the Fujiwara family through his father, and to the Minamoto family through his mother. He was born at the close of the twelfth century and entered the temple as a boy. He advanced rapidly both in scholarship and in society. On one occasion, when he received a beautiful gift from the emperor, he was greatly elated. This brought to his mind a former Buddhist saint who after a similar experience had been scolded by his mother for his joy over such worldly honors. He determined to retire from the world and to seek peace of mind by fasting and prayer before the Buddha, but three weeks of prostration did not bring him peace. For one hundred days in succession he walked several miles to spend the night in prayer before the Goddess of Mercy, but his restlessness and anxiety seemed to increase. On the last night, when he had become quite desperate, the goddess appeared to him in a trance, saying: "The important way of salvation in this lost world is the repetition of Amida's name. Go to Honen Shonin; he will save you from the sea of suffering." That morning, while returning, he met a disciple of Honen who told him that he too had had a similar experience. This disciple led Shinran into the presence of Honen to whom he freely opened up his soul as to a saintly father. Honen said: "You have been trying to save yourself; have faith in Amida, the

Lord of excellent life and light." Suddenly his tired soul found peace and joy in believing. He said of his feelings: "After twenty years of vain struggle I felt I had returned home from my wanderings."

Honen's principle made it possible to wipe out the distinction not only between the monk and the layman, but between men and women. The mercy of Amida was so great that even a wife and the responsibilities of a home were no hindrance to a religious life. It was a mistake to think that every man must retire from the world in order to obtain salvation. Tradition says that Kanezane Fujiwara, a leading government official, urged Honen to carry this teaching to its logical conclusion by choosing his best disciple to become the husband of his own daughter. Tradition also says that Shinran, having been prepared by a dream in which the Goddess of Mercy promised to become his wife, agreed to marry the lady and establish a home.

Tradition has woven a circle of romance about this event. The following story represents the problem which this marriage raised with many Buddhists of his own day. One day, when Shinran was returning to Mt. Hiei, the central sanctuary of the Tendai sect, he had met this young lady who said to him: "I wish to go to the top of this sacred mountain to worship; please guide me." Shinran was greatly surprised at this request and voiced his amazement in the reply: "But you are a woman." She was prepared for this rebuff, for until quite modern times no woman's foot has been allowed to tread the sacred mountains of Japan. Mountain guides still point out the barriers past which women were not allowed to go. At the foot of Tateyama they still show to visitors where a woman attempted to go beyond the barrier and was turned to stone; and where another woman was turned into a peculiarly shaped pine tree. The woman in question returned the gaze of the astonished Shinran and replied: "Although I am a woman, I have a human heart, and my

human heart longs for salvation. Is there no peace or joy for me?" Shinran replied: "You have the nunneries; go to one of them." But she objected: "The nunneries, like your monasteries, are places where people delve into ancient lore. I want a simple faith for simple people that all my sisters in Japan may enjoy the blessing of salvation." She then took from her bosom a crystal lens and handed it to Shinran, saying: "This jewel has the property of focusing light in one place until it burns intensely. Take it and use it as a symbol of what you are to do for religion. Concentrate your message upon some simple statement of faith for simple people, that their hearts may burn with its convincing, saving power." She then struck her breast three times, cursed Buddha, and disappeared as mysteriously as she had come. Shinran turned thoughtfully up the mountain, muttering to himself: "Truly, if a religion will not save the ignorant and the women, it is a lie."

Shinran went further and made faith the basis of this simple means of salvation. By faith, and faith alone, were men to be saved; even the desire for salvation was put in a man's heart by the mercy of Amida, the Buddha of measureless light and life. Without any other condition or demand Amida would save those who called upon his name once in faith. The repetition of his name was purely out of gratitude for salvation secured by faith. This faith wrought great changes in the practices of the believers of the Pure Land sect. Shinran is said to have married the woman who spoke to him that memorable day on Mt. Hiei. Thus in a concrete way he demonstrated that the doctrine of salvation by faith could save a married priest as well as a layman. When he was banished to a distant place, on account of the first effects of his extraordinary innovations, he and his wife went out among the peasantry and cheered their hearts by this simple gospel of salvation for simple people.

The tendency of this new faith was to abolish the crude

idolatry and many of the superstitions, forms and ceremonies of the older Buddhist sects. The priests of the Shinran sect marry, enjoy a legitimate family life and have a social place and mission in society. The believer in salvation by faith does not need to do penance, to build costly tombstones and pagodas for the dead, or to hold special ceremonies to assist his dead to avoid hell or get to heaven; he needs no magic words or seals of many temples on their burial shrouds; no prayers need be repeated as they carry a body to the grave. He need not receive the commandments or practice meditation or strive for that highest wisdom which in other sects is required to carry men to Nirvana. Faith in Amida is all-sufficient. The believer carries a "seal of discipleship" which shows that he has accepted Amida by faith. It is thought to help in rooting out sin and in promoting the good, and it is placed in the coffin to assist the spirit on its way to paradise.

This Pure Land (Jodo) sect holds many religious culture meetings, not unlike Christian services. For one week, beginning on November 21st, they hold thanksgiving ceremonies to express their gratitude to their founder for the blessings they enjoy. With fasting and purification they worship his spirit and read the scriptures. Unbelievers are exhorted to remember the great way that has been opened for them and in gratitude to enter the experiences of peace by faith. In the Pure Land sect, where salvation is obtained by the merit of repeating the name of Amida, they hold a ten days' service in October in memory of a certain earnest Buddhist politician, Sada Kinu, who desired to cut off his hair and become a priest. He went to the Shinyodo Temple in Kyoto and spent three days and nights repeating the name of Amida. On the third night he fell into a trance in which a venerable priest appeared to him and, commending his sincerity, advised him to wait at least three days before he became a priest. In Japanese poetic language the priest said: "If in your

heart you fulfil your vow, you may remain in this world untarnished." On the next day Sada Kinu became prime minister of Japan. This story reached the ears of the military ruler, who, to commemorate the event, organized a yearly religious ceremony to last fourteen nights. The methods of repeating the name of Amida has become classical. With long-drawn-out syllables believers repeat the sacred name to assist all people to gain the land of joy.

5. *The Nichiren Sect*

In the year 1253 A. D. an earnest young priest with deep convictions ascended Mt. Kurozumi, and, facing the morning sun, cried out: "Hail, mysterious law of the Lotus flower." He had assumed the name of Nichiren (Sun Lotus). He had studied Buddhism at all the great temples and had received instruction from many learned priests of many sects, and after announcing his intention to the national god at Ise, he had returned to his native village to found a new sect. Two important considerations led Nichiren to take this step. (1) He belonged to a family of loyalists. His father was so dissatisfied with the military rulers that he gave up his castle and retired to a fishing village, where Nichiren was born. His early training gave him a natural dislike for the Kamakura government and filled his soul with intense patriotism toward the emperor. (2) He was disappointed in the Buddhism of his day. The priests lacked the proper respect for authority; the emperor Shirakawa had already said that there were three things he could not control—the Kamo river, a throw of dice, and the priests of Mt. Hiei. Buddhism in his day had become worldly and degenerate. Nichiren felt that in harmony with an old Buddhist prophecy all the sects had wandered away from the pure teaching of the law contained in the Saddharma Pundarika. The revival of interest in Buddhism due to the work of the Pure Land sects did not appeal to him, since he regarded it as a device. He believed "in discarding device

and going straight to the truth." He decided, therefore, to organize a new sect which would "establish righteousness and strengthen the state." At the same time he was impressed by the simple method of calling upon Amida. Therefore, in place of this he devised a phrase which should center men's thoughts upon the perfect law contained in his scripture: "Hail to the mysterious law of the Lotus scripture." This became the prayer of the Nichiren sect and it is still repeated by Nichiren believers, accompanied by the beating of a drum.

This phrase was greatly adored by Nichiren. He said of it: "Many men read it with their mouths, few read it with their hearts, and still fewer read it with their bodies." He exhorted men to give their devotion to it as containing the unadulterated Buddhist ideal. In explanation of his devotion to a book, he worshiped it as the perfect law, as the revelation of the original Buddha, of which S'akyamuni was but a secondary manifestation. The original Buddha, he explained, resembles the moon, the historic Buddha is its reflection on the ocean. It may be reflected in every drop of water. To use a more modern terminology, the original Buddha is the electric power station, the revealed Buddha is the electric lamp. Mr. Nissho Hondo thus explaining Nichiren's idea regards it as a satisfactory explanation of pantheism on the one hand, and of polytheism on the other. Pantheism which makes even a frog a Buddha in nature; and polytheism and monotheism which either choose one god out of many, or arbitrarily recognize only one god, are equally illogical and untenable. Man must take his stand on "one supreme being" which is the root of all. This satisfies reason and recognizes all the gods of Shinto, while still retaining the One. One section of Nichiren stands thus ready to explain it according to a form of theism approximating Christianity.

Nichiren first solemnly explained his doctrine to the Sun Goddess; then he proceeded to the village temple, where a great crowd had gathered to hear him, for his

fame had gone before him. Even as a boy he had been looked upon by his fellow villagers as a prodigy, so all were in a spirit of expectancy. His ideas resemble our pre-millennial teaching. He declared that, five hundred years after the death of Buddha, the pure teaching of the sage was spread abroad and many without effort followed it. Then there was a second period of five hundred years, when Buddhahood was attained by diligence and asceticism. In a third period of five hundred years many temples were built; and in a fourth period of similar duration the "Pure Land was revealed, the merit of the sage's teaching was lost," and believers did not know the pure way. But now had been ushered in the latter day which was to continue for thousands of years, when a promised deliverer (whom he believed to be himself), an incarnation of the Buddha, would appear to lead them to the mysterious law of the Lotus. Then Nichiren began a fierce denunciation of all other sects of Buddhism, until there was not a person in his audience who was not enraged by his unexpected tirade. He declared that he had studied all the sutras for many years in many temples, and had been led to a deep conviction that "calling upon Amida for salvation was an illusion of hell; that the Zen sect was the doctrine of devils; that Shingon heresy would bring about national ruin; and that the Ritsu (Vinaya) sect was the enemy of Japan." He went on to assure them that to follow the sutra of the law of the Lotus (Saddharma Pundarika) would bring about their highest good and that those who refused to do so belonged to the family of devils. The people were held spellbound until he had finished, when a torrent of fierce resentment broke out and he was driven from the temple; only the intercessions of the head priest saved him from the sword of the village chief. He escaped by night from the village by a forest path, leaving none except his own parents to believe in his strange doctrine.

Nichiren went to Kamakura, the government center,

and took up his residence in a little temple which he built for himself. He began to do street preaching; and, while he made many enemies, he also attracted many friends by his zeal and his strange intolerant message. He wrote a book entitled *Establishing Righteousness and Giving Peace to the Country*. He prophesied national calamity and the coming of enemies, if Japan's evil ways were not rejected. Finally he was banished; but when the Mongol invasion of Japan took place, about 1270, he was hailed by most people as a true prophet and recalled from banishment. Public opinion was a little more tolerant toward him, so that he was able to gather some disciples. But he was as rabid toward other sects as before, and before long he was again in trouble. His spirit is greatly admired by the young men of modern Japan, and his sect has made a strong nationalistic appeal. His followers emulate his outspoken loyalty.

When Nichiren lay dying he rejected an image of Buddha which was placed before him in favor of a scroll on which was inscribed the name of the sutra of his choice. He looked upon it, took an attitude of reverent adoration, and his spirit passed away. Mr. Kanzo Uchimura says of this: "A bibliolater, and not an idolator was he." Nichiren believed firmly that his sutra contained all the truth, and that apart from it "the mistakes of Buddhism are more injurious to the world than the sins of the people." The title of this sutra in five Chinese characters stood for the whole of Buddhist truth; it has to be accepted by faith which comes from the depths of the heart and is manifested in the life. Nichiren thought that such a faith was of greater value than merely reading and reciting the sutra itself.

6. *The Various Sects Compared*

The ancient Buddhist sects were largely philosophical and therefore did not become popular. A Japanese scholar illustrates the relation of philosophy and religion by a

story taken from Buddhist tradition. A traveler wandering in a wilderness on a hot day became very thirsty. He succeeded in finding a deep well; he could see refreshing water at the bottom of it, but he did not know how to refresh himself, for he had no bucket. When he discovered that a drink from the well would quench his thirst his attitude was that of philosophy, but he got nowhere. The older sects pointed out the abstract principles and assumptions of absolute idealism in a beautiful way. They give the impression that they might satisfy the human soul, but the human soul has no means of getting close to such abstractions. Philosophy, however beautiful, fails to satisfy thirsty people who degenerate under its influence. When the traveler succeeds in drinking the cool water, and when he is refreshed by it, that is religious experience. The more popular sects adopted various means of reaching the water. The Shingon sect attempts to satisfy the people who are thirsting after God by magic, prayers, divination and mystic ceremonies, and by the repetition of sacred words which have special power (see p. 67). Even charms are used not unlike those a pious Roman Catholic wears about his neck. This accounts for the large following of Shingon. People are also attracted by the personality of its great founder, Kobo Daishi, whose national principles are attractive to all Japanese. The Pure Land sects refresh the thirsty soul and give peace through the frequent repetition of Amida's name. The Nichiren resembles them by a similar repetition of the name of their sacred book. It differs from them in its emphasis upon ethical and patriotic ideals, and in the nature of Buddha worship. It rejects Amida as a device and reveres the original Buddha as the real object of worship. As in other sects, the founders of these sects are worshiped because of their personal influence and power. The Zen sect was very popular among the ancient Samurai. It enabled the military man to rise above life and death and manifest the spirit of self-sacrifice for the

sake of the cause he represented. Its promise of mystic union with the Buddha is attractive to many reverent souls. The Zen experience is represented in this quotation: "Every night I sleep with Buddha, I rise with Buddha; asleep or awake, standing or sitting, talking or keeping silent, I am always close to Buddha; I follow Buddha as my shadow follows me. I never am separated from him by a hairbreadth. If you wish to know where Buddha is, he is in my voice."

STATISTICS

Sects	Sub- sects	Tem- ples	Preach- ing Places	Priests	Nuns	Foreign Mission- aries	Member- ship
Ritsu.....	..	Few	Few	Few	Few	None	Few
San Ron.....	..	Few	Few	Few	Few	None	Few
Hosso.....	..	Few	Few	Few	Few	None	10,286
Kegon.....	..	Few	Few	Few	Few	None	21,211
Tendai.....	3	4,548	203	9,326	744	None	2,093,903
Shingon.....	13	12,290	1,001	16,483	725	68	16,025,463
Jodo.....	2	8,350	405	9,570	848	158	3,116,840
True sect of Jodo	10	11,661	2,236	40,000	*8	382	13,089,890
Intercessory Jodo	..	Few	Few	Few	Few	None	130,421
Nichiren.....	10	5,009	999	8,180	272	73	2,810,987
Zen.....	10	20,879	892	32,877	2,361	158	8,345,848
Others.....		Few	Few	Few	Few		Few
Total.....		71,681	5,764	117,982	5,023		4,591,808

* The Priests of the True Sect marry.

Outside of Japan proper, Buddhism has 306 missionaries; of these in 1920, as reported by Buddhist authorities, 287 were in China, 5 in the South Sea Islands, 77 in America and 86 in Hawaii. The statistics given above are from the government report of 1918.

IX

THE CHRISTIAN APPEAL TO BUDDHISM

1. *The Unity of Man's Religious Life*

Race solidarity must be the starting point for all attempts to reach a basis for Christianity as the final religion. Robertson Smith says: "According to the doctrine of the Old Testament, the whole of revelation and salvation rests on the fact that man was created in the image of God and so became capable of entering into intelligent moral relation with his heavenly Father. Revelation must have a history conformed to the laws of human nature and limited by the universal rule that every permanent, spiritual and moral relation must grow up by slow degrees and obey a principle of internal development."¹ So Paul said: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

Confucianism and Buddhism are both prepared to accept the unity of man's religious life. Mencius said: "All things which are the same in kind are alike; why should we doubt in regard to man, as if he were a solitary exception? The sage and we are the same in kind."² He then illustrates this saying by noting the fact that men's feet, ears, eyes, tastes and minds desire the same things. The experience of God by all men is similar, as is also the development of religious ideals. A modern Buddhist writer lays stress upon the fact of the unity of man's religious life and nature when he says: "All beings are endowed with the Buddha nature. . . . From the absolutely

¹ *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 4.

² Book VI, Part I, Chap. VII, p. 313.

monistic point of view, not only all human races are one in spirit, but even the lower animals and inanimate existences are manifestations of one spirit. . . . Buddhas are not exclusive chosen beings. They are in nature just as we ordinary mortals are. . . . On the other hand, let us once be illuminated and all our failings will turn into saintly virtues, that is, we shall be Buddhas. 'I am Buddha that is, and you are Buddhas to be' . . . is proclaimed in the Brahmajali sutra, and here lies the philosophical foundation of Buddhism as a world religion."^a These ways of presenting the basis for a world religion are worthy of comparison and careful study.

Facts might be cited to show that modern science and education tend to strengthen our belief in the fundamental unity of the race. The history of Japan bears close resemblance to that of any Western nation. It is curiously parallel to that of the British Island empire. Physiology and medicine apply to all races alike, and it is more and more evident that the psychology of the Orient is not essentially different from that of the Occident. There is no such thing as one type of truth for the East and another opposite type for the West. Man is one in his essential nature, physical, mental and spiritual. He comprehends truth, reacts to it and orders his life by it in much the same way all round the world.

2. *The Religious Education of the Race*

If man is one, his process of religious education is essentially the same all over the world. It resembles the education of our children; we do not expect a child to begin the study of English by reading Tennyson, Browning or Shakespeare. Its training begins with the alphabet, or with simple words and phrases. The finest course of training begins in the kindergarten with blocks to teach shape, balls to teach color, a pile of sand to teach physical geography.

^a Rev. Y. Imamura, Director of the Hongwani Mission in Hawaii.

The student of the history of religions is impressed by the fact that the religious education of the race has been a long historical process through many centuries. Jesus Christ came in the fullness of time, but He utilized the heritage of twelve centuries of exceptional religious development. Even God's people, as the Old Testament record shows, began religiously as a people of religious simplicity. They made much use of symbols. Consider the significance of the brazen serpent, the ark or portable shrine, various forms of sacrifice, and the many primitive ceremonies perpetuated among the Jews. God was identified with sacred places and objects, offerings, tithes, festivals, vows, prayers and god-possession. The response of the divine being through lots and oracles was universally recognized, and the spirit was everywhere identified with wind or breath, just as it was in ancient Shinto where "the soul was believed to be composed of two parts, the one mild, refined and happy; the other wild, raw and raging . . . it is certain that the idea of the soul was associated inseparably with respiration." ⁴ Religious experience was impulsive and ecstatic, the body being distinguished from the living breath or soul. This was the age which may be described as the kindergarten stage of religious development. Even in this first stage the Biblical records reveal a grandeur of ethical religious revelation, which as an historical fact has no comparison anywhere; it is purer, and more profound than any other account of primitive religious ideals.

A second stage of the world's religious development was the age when men everywhere were struggling with the problem of suffering. Broadly speaking, it ranged in time from the eighth to the third century B. C., centuries of remarkable religious illumination. In India, S'akyamuni was greatly impressed by the suffering of birth, disease, old age and death. All existence seemed to be suffering, and annihilation seemed the only means of escape from

▪ *Religious History of Japan*, Dr. Masaharu Anesaki.

it. In Persia, the followers of Zoroaster laid stress upon the struggle between good and evil with great emphasis upon suffering as an evil. In China, Confucius and Laotzu were both impressed with the social evils and sufferings of their day; the former sought relief in practical teaching, the latter expounded a transcendent way. In Greece, Heraclitus, "the weeping philosopher," looked upon the world with equal contempt. In Babylonia, Isaiah, in the exposition of the "suffering servant of Jehovah" and in his ethical appeal for "the wicked to forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts," was opening up an attractive revelation of religious truth. The authors of Job and Jonah were rising beyond their age. As a matter of fact, apart from any theory, in this age as in the former, a comparative study of religious ideals reveals a great age of religious progress in which the Biblical revelation of the prophets stands out preëminently in ethical and social values.

The third stage of the world's religious development centered about the age of Christ. It was an age of spiritual and mental activity in which men were grasping the profound significance of divine immanence and of incarnation. In India, the incarnate Tathagata⁵ was clearly defined. In China, Mencius had already identified the innate virtue of man with the "shining virtue" of heaven. In Greece, the Logos doctrine was taking definite shape as something "common to all men, yet all men live as if each had a private wisdom of his own." The Stoics declared that every man has as his soul a spark from the world-soul, and thus becomes a fragment of God. In Egypt, Philo was enunciating a combination of the Logos with the Jewish "word of God" as the "first begotten of God," the second "God," and "the everlasting revelation of God's presence in the world." But in a unique way Jesus of Nazareth was the chief cornerstone of this age; he revealed the true meaning of God's presence in man, not as

⁵ A term applied to the Buddha and to all incarnate beings.

a theory or a philosophy or as an abstraction, but as a profound, individual, religious experience of God. He was conscious of being God's son and of having a special mission to mankind for which he was willing to die. His disciples verified that experience, and Paul had himself such a clear revelation of the spirit of Christ and of his significance as divine that he could say in Colossians that he is the "image of the invisible God in whom all fullness dwells," the great and final revelation of God in the human heart.

All subsequent ages of religious activity have been based upon the achievements of the age of Christ. From the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries there occurred another period of religious revival. In China, the philosopher Wang was the greatest personality in a movement back to Mencius emphasizing the incarnate Way, and the necessity of returning to one's original nature. In Japan, Honen Shonin, Shinran Shonin and Nichiren were the outstanding personalities in a great religious movement centering around the incarnate Tathagata. The first two of these leaders emphasized the power of Amida to save, converting thousands, while Nichiren felt that he himself was the incarnation of a former Buddha. In Europe, many great reformers endeavored to revive the spiritual experience and religion of Jesus. The fact that these religious movements went back to the age of Jesus for their inspiration and power is significant. No other final resource can be reached. The historical personality of Jesus stands supreme. His is the only historical name, and he the only religious leader, who has brought God to men in such fashion that men everywhere turn to him to reveal God, to save the world from sin, and to bring peace to men of good will.

A comparative study of these world religious movements makes it clear that a final religion for all humanity is not only possible but necessary. In no age has religious thinking been limited to any one race or hemisphere; the

religious manifestations of our common nature have been similar everywhere. The similar religious movements in different parts of the world, at approximately the same time, imply that the Holy Spirit in man has been at work in every race, and that the fundamental, ethical, religious and social needs of mankind are everywhere pretty much the same, so that it is possible and reasonable to think of men everywhere moving toward one common fulfillment of true, real, spiritual longings.

3. *Points of Similarity between Japanese Buddhism and Christianity.*

(a) *Buddhist and Christian Doctrines of the Trinity.* An earnest and devout Buddhist professor claims that "God and Buddha once defined to be the same . . . believing in Christianity would be the same with believing in Buddhism. . . . As the Trinity is the doctrine concerning Godhead and explains what it is, so 'The Three Bodies of Buddha in One' is the doctrine of Buddha, that is, the explanation of the supreme object of worship in Buddhism." He then proceeds to show that the doctrine of the Trinity and that of the "Three Bodies of Buddha in One" are identical. The absolute Buddha omnipresent in all things, or truth, corresponds to God the Father, Creator of all things or "primary truth." Thus, he says, "This Father corresponds to the law-body of Buddha (*dharmakaya*) and I believe these two are different in name, but the same in reality."

The "reward-body" is the second "body." "It is the reward of good conduct and self-culture; it is essentially "existent and is spiritual, nay, it is the spirit or soul of Buddha." It corresponds to the spirit of God upon whom our faith in the saving power of God depends. This second "body" includes all incarnations of the absolute Buddha which, after a long struggle in the six states of existence, have finally evolved the highest personal manifesta-

■ Notice the use made of these ideas in VI, 3b (page 61),

tion of the Absolute. They have attained paradise which is the desire of all living beings, and one more birth will enable them to enter Nirvana, which is equivalent to complete absorption in the impersonal Absolute. Before doing so they take a vow not to enter Nirvana until they shall have saved all living beings who call upon them. The most common of these saints is Amida, who is described as possessing measureless light and life.

The third "body" of Buddha represents such beings as S'akyamuni, who came to the world to save men, and corresponds with Jesus Christ born as a man to save the world. Thus the three bodies of Buddha respectively correspond to the three persons in God. "As we see in the psychology of man, that intellect, emotion and will are nothing but three phases of one mind, so here it is evident that the three bodies of Buddha and the three persons of God are respectively three phases of one Buddha and of one God. . . . I, as one of the Buddhists, hope that these two great religions may be unified into a still greater and more ideal one."

Many Buddhists of to-day think, as this professor did, that the law-body of Buddha resembles the Christian conception of God the Father. In an anonymous⁷ pamphlet issued by the new Buddhist propaganda in Tokyo this similarity is thus emphasized: "Asamga says in one of his illustrious works: 'As ether is all-pervading, so also is Buddha. . . .' Again we read in a sutra of the Mahayana sect: 'In all beings there abideth the law-body (*dharmakaya*); with all virtues dissolved in it, it liveth in eternal calmness; it knoweth not birth nor death, coming nor going, not one, not two, not being, not becoming; yet is present everywhere in worlds of being. This is what is perceived by all incarnate beings (*Tathagatas*); all virtues material and immaterial, dependent on the law-body, are eternally pure in it.' The law-body is the divine

⁷ Such Buddhist pamphlets are usually anonymous. Evidently the tract was prepared by a scholar.

life of Buddha which permeates the universe, directs its course, and shapes its destiny. We can realize eternal peace and joy through our faith in Buddha." The similarities are emphasized by their explanation: "We must not, however, suppose that the religious life can be consummated by forsaking the world, where we are doomed to struggle for existence; for the universe is the holy temple of Buddha, and nature is his gospel. Every flower that blooms by the wayside sings a song in praise of his glory, and every star that twinkles above our heads shines forth his sacred law." When this can be said of the absolute Buddha, the similarity between Amida refusing to enter Nirvana until he had saved all beings, and some Christian interpretations of the Christ, is very striking.

It is not uncommon for Buddhist scholars, or even Christian converts from Buddhism, to emphasize these points of similarity. When an absolute idealist maintains the Absolute as a notion or an abstraction too profound for ordinary people, and God the Father as a religious term that appeals to common people, it is difficult to discern any fundamental difference between his point of view and that of Buddhists. The Christian missionary cannot, of course, accept this Buddhist idea of the threefold expression of God in life as any real equivalent of the true Christian view of the Godhead, but he may profitably use them as an approach to the clearer view.

(b) *Buddhist and Christian Mysticism.* Mystical elements in Buddhism and Christianity are quite similar. "The world we live in is never at peace, it is boisterous and full of trouble as a house on fire; it is a valley of fear and horror on account of its abundant pain and trouble. . . . It is only by the power of the incarnate Buddha that it is possible to attain salvation and complete deliverance,"⁸ is a familiar statement. An ancient priest walking with his disciples, having witnessed certain clever water sports, instructed them thus: "Only by trusting our

⁸ *Saddharma Pundarika.*

heavy bodies entirely to the water are we able to float successfully. So it is only when we entrust ourselves entirely to the mercy of Amida that we are delivered from evil. This alone is the true way of salvation." Not only is this reliance upon Buddha emphasized, but mystic union with the "Incarnate One" and the identity of all our best desires and impulses with his is taught. His spirit and mercy help the infirmities of man to seek salvation which is granted "without any condition."

The student of religious psychology easily recognizes the similarity between the religious experience of a pious Buddhist and that of the Christian who sings:

Other refuge have I none
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.

It is not unnatural that many of our Christian hymns have been adapted by Buddhist pietists whose heart-yearnings resemble those of Christian saints and hermits. In fact, monasticism in Christianity is held by many to have been a non-Christian system probably received from India through Egypt. The peculiar dress and appearance of the Roman monk is Oriental; the rosary, candles, incense, relic worship, baptism, the worship of saints and many other religious forms cherished in Romanism originated in non-Christian religions. True, they have been greatly refined by the practical, moral, social ideals of Jesus, but the similarity is so striking that no surprise is occasioned when we learn that the medieval Christian church entered S'akyamuni in the Roman calendar and worshiped him as a Christian saint, Josaphat.

(c) *Common Background of the Two Religions.* There is a true mystical element in all deep Christian experience, an emphasis upon the direct and conscious relationship to God. It is, in fact, the intense, dynamic side of religion seeking for reality beyond the self, reaching out beyond the results of intellectual studies. Every missionary can find among Buddhists those who think, at

least, that they are in harmony with his spiritual readiness to commit himself to God. This attitude constitutes a real approach. The background of medieval Christianity, with its pre-Copernican conception of the universe, bears a close resemblance to that of Buddhism.⁹ The highest world of the Tendai sect resembles the "highest heaven" in the *Divine Comedy*, Dante describes it as a place where God dwells in perfect peace, just as Buddha dwells in the tenth world. The following words of Dante might have been written by a Buddhist saint:

Forth from the last corporeal we are come,
 Into the heaven, that is embodied life,
 Light intellectual, replete with love,
 Love of true happiness replete with joy.
 Joy that transcends all sweetness of delight.

Neo-Platonism and Gnosticism had an essentially Buddhist point of view. What would Christianity have become had it not struggled against Neo-Platonic and Gnostic heresies? John Stuart Mill in his *Essay on Liberty* says: "How different a thing the Christianity of the world might have been if the Christian faith had been adopted as the religion of the empire under the auspices of Marcus Aurelius instead of those of Constantine." Its appeal would then have been that of essential Christianity as presented by the New Testament in the sayings and historical personality of its founder and his disciples.

Many of the most remarkable points of resemblance between Buddhism and Christianity may be accounted for, in some degree, by the influence of Greek philosophy on Christian theology. Whether it is possible to trace any direct historical connection between Greek philosophy and Mahayana Buddhism or not, there is, in Indian and Buddhist philosophy, a close resemblance to Greek schools of philosophy. Southern Buddhists agree with Heraclitus in declaring that becoming and constantly changing

⁹ See T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 195. Medieval Chinese missionaries regarded the similarities as the work of the devil.

existence are real, everything being in a state of perpetual flux. The Hosso sect of Buddhism resembles the Eleatic school of Greek philosophy in declaring that Absolute Being alone is real, the idea of changes in existence being due to an illusion of the senses due to "a receptacle-like knowledge" which resembles the "Seminal-Logos"; it contains the seeds of existence. The doctrine of the Shingon sect, in which "the body itself is Buddha," resembles Aristotle's teaching that the form realizes itself in matter. The Kegon and Tendai "Ideal World" resembles the ideal of Plato; it transcends the world of matter which is regarded as evil or darkness, a shadow of the real. Zen learning resembles the philosophy of the Neo-Platonists whose reality is "a unity without parts" grasped by meditation or by a long process of achievement.

The words of Ninomiya: "Walking through an old path, kicking the dead leaves hither and thither, one may find the footprints of the God of heaven and earth," are true. Buddhism is like an old path covered over by dead leaves. These various points of similarity are "the footprints of the God of heaven and earth" which are a source of great inspiration and encouragement to the follower of Jesus, who realizes with Paul that God has never left Himself without witness. Without these points of contact the work of Christian evangelism would be very difficult, if not impossible. But since they constitute, however misunderstood, a basis for friendly discussion, they are worth more than passing consideration.

(d) *Current Buddhism Drawing toward Christianity.* Modern Buddhism and Shinto are more and more approaching Christian standards of life and service. Young men who only know the Buddhism of the last twenty years do not understand historic Buddhism at all. They see it through spectacles colored by contact with the modern Christian movement. They explain the ancient denial of the existence of a self as self-denial, or self-abnegation. They explain transmigration by modern sci-

ence as a sort of evolution. Even the Absolute is spoken of in a personal way as "the Supreme Being." Christian hymns are adapted to the praises of Amida Buddha. Even the historic Buddhist attitude toward women and children is being given up and interpreted by Christian ideals. That no woman can enter paradise without being reborn as a man is interpreted by the words of Christ that in the resurrection "They neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Some day, if this process continues, historical criticism will reveal the true source of such ideals, and Buddhist scholars may find the great glory of Jesus Christ.

After pointing out that Christianity teaches love, Buddhism mercy, Confucianism benevolence, and Shinto truth, Professor Genji Kato, a specialist in the science of religion and well versed in the Old Testament, says: "Christianity, Buddhism and Shinto are all one. They only vary in having a different wording to express the same fundamental truth. . . . Christians and Buddhists should each acknowledge the divinity of their founders, Jesus and S'akyamuni. We would never agree with any man who acknowledges divinity in the founder of his own religion, but denies it in another." In somewhat the same spirit Munetada Kurozumi, the founder of one of the most advanced sects of Shinto, has said: "God or Buddha, though the names differ, are nothing but one being who has his existence in world truth." Again the name Amida is used to describe the Absolute of measureless light and life. Buddha has come to stand for the "ideal of saintship," the highest personality in Buddhism who has risen above the world of sense and self and is ready to enter Nirvana. Mahayana Buddhism has usually identified this stage with the "Great Indifference" in which all individuality is lost, but in Japan a certain group of scholars in the Nichiren sect have so nearly approached Christianity that they seem ready to say that God and the original Buddha are the same "Supreme Being." For them Amida

or Buddha includes whatever of good God the Father represents. The names differ, but the reality is the same. The Christian teacher finds in this identification the opportunity to develop a richer sense of what God must be.

Similarly, Shinto is also being progressively interpreted, as one may understand from Shinto sayings which describe the omnipresence, omniscience and providential care of God the Father. The poems of the late Emperor Meiji reveal a form of theism, which, as the product of Buddhist and Shinto contacts, is not unlike the Christian idea of the fatherhood of God. He wrote many sayings such as the following: "Day and night God protects even the obscure parts of this land, where my thought fails to reach"; "Because of the existence of God who guides all men, the world is being civilized in an unprecedented way. How could God fail to help the army that moves forward for the benefit of the world? God's authority is seen protecting the world in time of need." Dr. Kato, commenting on these ideas, said: "Coming to know God to be like this, one experiences for the first time the exquisite part of religion. It is owing to this view of theism that Christ could see the glory of God revealed even in a lily and in a falling sparrow."

The experience of Amida in the heart is similarly explained as an experience which leads men to a consciousness of the boundless mercy of the Absolute one. Shinran Shonin, the founder of the True sect, says: "Even though worldly power may keep our eye from seeking the light of salvation, the great mercy of Amida is shining upon us, without tiring." In harmony with this idea of communion between man and the divine, the most attractive scriptural quotations are repeated from the voluminous Buddhist writings. In the Ayamas Nirvana is described as that condition of the soul in which avarice, anger, complaints and all worldly passions are entirely and permanently removed. This, Buddhist scholars say, is the true ideal of Buddhism. Even the supramundane

character of older forms of Buddhism is being superseded by more worldly ideas. "The present world is the Western Paradise itself."

Not only are the non-Christian religions of Japan approaching the Christian ideals of God, but they are also coming to lay stress on similar ideas of humanity. Buddhism and Christianity are both alike cosmopolitan and universal and are having a cosmopolitan influence upon Shinto which has been strictly national. Both Buddhism and Christianity are opposed to war. Buddhism teaches mercy for even animals, birds and insects, forbidding the destruction of living beings. Both religions modify their ideals of love and mercy for the sake of righteousness and justice. During those days following the passing of the anti-Japanese immigration law, leading Shintoists and Buddhists called into counsel not only Japanese Christian leaders, but also the foreign missionaries of Tokyo. Their professed purpose was friendly and was prompted by their conviction that these three great religions had much in common. They realized even more than the missionaries did that the national humiliation meant very great embarrassment to all foreigners, but they also felt that the hope of the future peace of the world depends upon the way in which Christians and Buddhists alike are able to counteract the pernicious influence of racial prejudice and misunderstanding.

4. *Points of Fundamental Difference between Buddhism and Christianity.*

Notwithstanding all these approaches to Christianity by modern Buddhists, it is necessary to indicate certain essential points of difference. A young missionary was asked, a while ago: "What have you that we have not?" Everything that young inexperienced missionary thought to be unique in Christianity his questioner declared that Japanese already possessed in Confucianism and Buddhism. Such declarations every missionary must take

into account. He needs to consider carefully the fundamental differences between Buddhism and Christianity.

(a) *The Personality of the Supreme Being.* In spite of the modern approach to Christian theism by a few prominent Buddhist leaders, the Christian idea of God is fundamentally different from the Buddhist conception of Ultimate Reality. The writer gave an address on "Buddhism and Christianity" in a certain city of Japan. At the close of the lecture he was invited to meet one of the priests of the city; and in company with the pastor of the Christian church he went to the priest's temple. There, to his surprise, he met in the person of the priest his first teacher of the Japanese language and of Buddhism, twenty years earlier. The following conversation took place:

"Have you read our sacred book, the Saddharma Pundarika (using the Sanscrit name)?"

"Yes, I have a translation of it which I have read with great interest."

"That is our (Buddhist) Bible. Our good St. Nichiren greatly adored it. I have found peace for the first time since I have relied upon it."

"I am glad you have found peace. I am especially interested in finding a priest able to explain this scripture to me. Is your ultimate reality personal or impersonal? Is it law, or the Absolute emptied of all particularity and individual distinction?"

"My ultimate reality is personal. I believe in the personality of the Supreme Being, Buddha or God, whichever you prefer to call him."

"In your scripture there is a parable¹⁰ which represents the world as a burning house. The enlightened father, realizing the danger, rushes from the house, but the ignorant children are so engrossed in play that in spite of all warning they remain in the house. In desperation, the father resorts to a lie. He offers them three carts, an ox cart, a deer cart and a goat cart, if they will rush out of

¹⁰ See the *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXI.

the house at once. They immediately go out; but the father then announces that he has only one cart, 'The-One-Buddha-Vehicle.' What does that story mean? Does it not mean that even 'The-One-Buddha-Vehicle' is a toy, a device to attract ignorant people, and that the personal Buddha is a method for leading men to some higher impersonal reality described as 'emptied of all particularity'?"

The priest was troubled by this question, and his wife, who had been a Bible student, entering the room at that time, asked him if he had been scolded for being a Buddhist. He replied: "No, no, but he asked me a question I cannot answer." As he was bidding us good-by he said: "It does not matter whether that story means to teach impersonal reality or an Absolute without particularity; I believe in a personal Buddha." I replied: "Then it does not matter whether you call yourself a Buddhist and continue to live in this beautiful temple or not. If you truly believe in a personal God, and in personality as an end and not as a device, then in God's sight you are more truly Christian than you are Buddhist. You are not far from the Kingdom of God."

Some time later, the pastor who heard this conversation, reported that after about a month that priest gave up his comfortable living and joined the Christian church, becoming a teacher in a government school. The Buddhist Absolute is "a unity without parts" like the Neo-Platonic conception. It is emptiness or reality obtained by emptying out all individuality; it is pure subjectivity. From the Christian point of view there is no such thing. The only kind of unity capable of embracing subjectivity and objectivity, without explaining away the difference, is personality. That is what we mean by personality. The Christian God is a personal unity, which makes personality always an end, absolute and divine. The recognition of this is the only basis for democracy in modern society.

It is encouraging and enlightening to recall how nearly all men agree in making personality ultimate. St. Augustine said: "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our souls cannot find rest till they find rest in Thee." This experience which Paul describes as seeking the Lord "if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us," is well illustrated in the evolution of Buddhist thought. From the atheism of early Buddhism there has developed a near monotheism. The early Buddhists described the universe as "an ocean of birth and death" due to Karma, without any need for the permanent self of either God or man. Dr. Murakami points out that S'akyamuni, in his talk with Alara Kalama, denied the reality not only of the individual self, but of the God self, and thus did early Buddhism differ from Brahmanism. But early Buddhists soon realized that it was not possible to retain the identity of a being in the various stages of transmigration if there was nothing corresponding to a permanent soul, so they devised a permanent unity of soul to provide for this identity and explained the universe by a kind of individual idealism, as distinct from their idea of the Absolute, which at this stage was quiet and inactive. But to account for this "unity" they advanced to an active Absolute as the cause of all things, which were mere appearances of reality like the wave in its relation to the ocean. Then, finally, in various ways they advanced to a form of absolute idealism which identified all things with the Absolute into which they melt and lose all distinction. All things, all phenomena melt into one thought, one true form emptied of content, pure subjectivity. But they usually fail to take the last step which recognizes subjectivity as pure form or a mere abstraction. There is no form without content, no subjectivity without objectivity. In the development of Northern Buddhism, however, there is a remarkable evolution from primitive atheism up to a very high form of monotheism. This finds its highest expres-

sion in interpretations of Amida as the "being of measureless light and life" and in the "supreme being" of a certain group of Nichiren followers.

Personality is the only rational unity of subjectivity and objectivity. There is no other unity capable of uniting multiplicity in one without destroying particularity. To stop at pure form, pure subjectivity, is to find rest in the refined myth of the "Great Void," a mere assumption familiar to early Greek and Chinese and Indian imagination. A system that culminates in impersonal pantheism loses its moral appeal. Personality alone is able to attain and perfect the moral ideal. Holy personality alone gives a rational meaning to all our struggles and efforts for either ethical or mental attainment. In the holy personality of God, subjective and objective are alike real and necessary. The world of phenomena does not have to be explained away, but is explained and understood by the laws of thought which are the expression of God's thought. The Christian conception of God must eventually prevail.

(b) *Jesus Christ the Son of God.* Even though some Buddhists accept the personality of God from the standpoint of philosophy and speak of him in abstract terms which resemble those of Christian theologians, the distinctive theism of Christianity is only found in the God-consciousness of Jesus the Son of God. Even among Christians it may be said that there are almost as many conceptions of God as there are Christians. The common center of agreement, however, lies in the acceptance of Jesus as the revealer of God. Jesus' experience of God's fatherhood is the distinguishing mark of his followers. That experience gave him his convictions and his divine mission as the Son of God. Paul described that experience as "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirits that we are children of God; and if children then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." This experience with all its ethical and social implications

constitutes a fundamental point of difference between Christians and Buddhists.

If Buddhists accept the personality of God, then it is only a step to their acceptance of the Kingdom of God and of Jesus Christ. Let Christians accept the Buddhist historical, traditional and philosophical approach to God as one contribution to the world's religious life. But Christians must insist upon Jesus as the true revealer of God to man. In the age of Nara, when the flow of civilization was from India, the emperor of Japan and many leading Shintoists accepted S'akyamuni as the spiritual center of that civilization. In the fifteenth century, when the flow of civilization was from China, Buddhist priests introduced the Confucian learning of the Sung and Ming dynasties and introduced Japan to its spiritual values, not attempting to imitate it. The result in both cases was good. In the former case, Shinto leaders yielded to the foreign religion, but the outcome was some of the greatest religionists of that age. In the latter case, Buddhists accepted the foreign teaching, even though it afterward threatened their position of supremacy in Japan. But the new teaching produced many great Confucian saints without whose example and teachings Japanese life would have been much the poorer. To-day the flow of civilization is from the West. Buddhists and other Japanese must accept the spiritual leadership of Jesus in order to combat the menace of Western materialism that knows not Christ. If the modern world does not accept the spiritual leadership of Jesus as the revealer of God to man, and of man to himself, modern civilization is in danger of disintegration.

Amida and other such Buddhist beings are quite often presented as being neither quite like the Absolute on the one hand, nor quite human on the other. This makes Amida worship abound in declarations which recall those of the early heretics regarding Jesus. But in presenting Jesus to Buddhists it is important to insist that "in his humanity he was man and in his divinity he was God."

The Christian appeal to the Buddhist must exalt the historical personality of the man Jesus, and also that essential deity which enabled him to say: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." But this appeal to thoughtful Buddhists must present God as a living ethical experience, and it must always emphasize personality in God and in man as an end, never as a device.

(c) *The Spirit of God Living and Holy.* Another important point of difference between Buddhism and Christianity is the character of the Spirit of God as living and holy. "Life," "eternal life," "the more abundant life" are expressions which have a distinctive meaning for Jesus and his followers. "This is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Life is conceived of as a characteristic of God. Holiness belongs to God and is inseparable from Him. Both of these ideals are absolute characteristics of God. The Spirit of God is revealed not only in Jesus Christ, but is the source of the Christian's power to live right.

In the Shingon sect doctrine of "adding and holding the three secrets," in which the mystical power of the Absolute is added to and held by men, there is an approach to the Christian teaching about the Spirit of God. But the Holy Spirit of the Living God is to a Christian quite a different ethical and practical source of power in a man's life. Christians emphasize the holiness and life of the Spirit of God not merely as a dogma, but as an experience. By the power of the Holy Spirit the refreshing waters of the well which the philosophers see to be a necessity come within the reach of all. In fact, Jesus described this well when he said to the Samaritan woman that it was a "well of water springing up into everlasting life." The Christian invitation is for all to come "and drink of the water of life freely."

(d) *The Real End of Religion.* Another striking difference between Christianity and Buddhism lies in the

difference between the Kingdom of God and either the Paradise or Nirvana of Buddhism. The Christian God is a God of living men and not of the dead. The Kingdom of God Jesus defined as an element in human life, and not merely something after death. He preached a new social ideal; Christianity was therefore a religion for living men in society as opposed to a religion which dwelt upon the paradise of the dead or on Nirvana, which is equivalent to absorption in an absolute reality robbed of particularity.

Christian and Buddhist views of individuality and of men, women and children as individuals are different. From the Buddhist point of view man is bound by the twelve-linked chain of causation in the "sea of birth and death," from which it is not easy to escape. He may have to ignore human relationships. An emphasis on this idea leads to a lowering of the place of women and of children. Thus a pessimistic shade is cast over the child and the woman, although in modern times the orthodox Buddhist point of view is practically rejected. Japanese Buddhists, however, have risen above other Buddhists in regard to the individual. Saigyō, a famous saint and hermit, roughly pushing his child aside, fled forth from his home seeking eternal peace; afterward he wrote: "Even though I think I am nothing, and have thrown myself away, yet I feel chilly on a snowy day." Buddhism explains individuality away, but that does not remove the individual problem which is the reason for its existence.

The difference between Buddhist and Christian ideals concerning the individual may be understood by their different estimates of human life. For a Buddhist life is a fleeting, passing stage in a constantly changing chain of existence; it is called a "temporary dwelling place." The writer, lecturing to Japanese students on "The Psychological Basis of Religion," pointed out the constantly changing nature of consciousness, saying that "We can-

not step twice into the same stream"; that our conscious life is a constant flux; and commenting further that if that were all we could say, education, culture, or even life itself is scarcely worth while. One of the students present who had Buddhist prejudices suddenly struck the desk and exclaimed: "But, teacher, that is all it is, a changing, fleeting, temporary dwelling place," and he dropped his head on his arm and wept like a child. From that time the endeavor was made to present the permanent value and unity of individuality and to lead this student and others like him to see and appreciate the value of personality as taught by Jesus. This incident illustrates a fundamental difference between Buddhist and Christian ideals. It is easy in the East to throw away life, because the value of human life has not been emphasized, though the taking of life of any kind is contrary to Buddhist teaching.

The national appeal of Shinto and Buddhism has been effective. The recent revival of the Nichiren sect was almost entirely due to its national appeal. Christians have sometimes feared these nationalistic tendencies, but the time has come for an intense national Christian movement for Japan and the Japanese. The national appeal in China, India and America is effective; and it may be the impelling force that will stir the Christian forces of Japan to cast off the stigma of being called a foreign religion, and to unite in a national Christian appeal. Christianity, without being nationalistic, may be united and national. From a moral and social point of view. Christianity is the only solution for the modern world. For Japan to accept modern materialism without the spiritual leadership of Jesus is to endanger her national life.

(e) *Different Methods in Buddhism and Christianity.* The method of Buddhism, like that of Scholasticism in Europe, is purely deductive. Bacon described it as the method of the spider which spins its web out of itself and then waits for the fly to fall into it. Buddhist scholars have spun their assumptions out of their own imagination

and then fitted the facts into their web; or, when the facts have refused to melt into the web, they have explained them away. Their Absolute is without difference or distinction, and is described as reality emptied of content. Their Absolute is a "Unity without parts," a beautiful creation of imagination which is a sort of refined and cultured idealization without much reference to the facts. Consequently Amida and other such beings become mere devices to impress ignorant people without any historical or concrete facts to account for their reality.

The method of Jesus was inductive. It resembled the method of the honey bee flying from flower to flower gathering the material and working it over into delicious honey. Jesus did not define God, but pointed to concrete facts in history, nature and experience as the basis for his conviction in the Fatherhood of God. Just as Jesus said, "Consider the lilies of the field," modern Christian teachers are expected to know and say, "Consider the facts as revealed by modern science, including psychology and ethics." These facts and especially the latest work on relativity make it impossible to deny the rational personal nature of existence. It is the task of philosophy to unify, relate and draw conclusions from the facts. This was the method of Jesus in religion. This method calls forth uncompromising conviction. Fichte described several stages in the development of man's moral view of reality. At first, like the Buddhist, bound by the chain of causation, man is oppressed by necessity. To him all things are mere appearance without reality. Then in this sea of illusion, like a lighthouse rises the categorical imperative, "Thou must." On this he rises above the bondage of necessity and rejoices in the freedom of spiritual duty which "makes man superior to phenomena and a citizen of the supersensuous world which encompasses and lightens every human heart." To account for this free moral activity and to explain relativity and all other facts of modern science including psychology, the world

ground must be spiritual, progressive and personal. In other words, the universe of facts becomes as the experience of God. The so-called external, material world is but one side of the only Unity we can conceive of as capable of grasping multiplicity, subjectivity and objectivity in one thought, viz. *personality*.

The Buddhist method must be given up before there can be a reformation within this great religion. A priesthood recruited by those who drift into it as an occupation rather than by reason of conviction will usually place its living above the spiritual needs of the people. It is to the advantage of the Buddhist hierarchy to hold the people to their superstitious ignorance and pessimism. Japanese Buddhism is in crying need of a reformer great enough to accept Jesus and His way instead of attempting to imitate Christian methods. The Christian message in Japan or elsewhere must be presented with conviction and unflinching loyalty to the truth. Her ministering servants must be men who are called of God to their religious mission and not following their profession for any ulterior reason. Such convictions based upon facts of experience will give the Christian gospel power and authority.

The history of Buddhism in Japan well illustrates the folly of building up a religious system upon mere assumption, clever device, imitation or insincere theory. The great Buddhist priests of the eighth century thought they could absorb the indigenous religious life of Japan by such methods, and indeed it looked as if they had succeeded, for from their time it became popular to build shrines like temples and to identify gods and Buddhas. It seemed as if the theory of the identity of Buddhist and Japanese gods had established Buddhism forever. Unfortunately the whole basis of the theory was device. One thousand years afterward, when the facts were investigated and the truth brought to light, Buddhist idols were thrown out of the shrines, Indian pessimism was rejected, and the national spirit was restored. The imperial line

was reinstated, Shinto became once more the national cult, and the country was opened up and religious freedom granted by the constitution. In Japanese history, when the truth became known, the people became free. The words of Jesus, "The truth shall make you free," may well be called the charter of true freedom. It gives freedom from falsehood, superstition, imitation, hard selfishness and sin. But with the exception of a few brilliant Buddhist scholars and some earnest educated priests, the great majority of the Buddhist priests still encourage the most primitive kinds of superstition and mystical ideas without much effort to free the people, who blindly follow them; worse still, they make little effort, proportionate to their power, to clean up the moral and social evils of society. It took one thousand years for the people to reject the devices which absorbed Shinto; to-day Buddhism instead of frankly accepting the leadership of Jesus is repeating the same kind of mistake, by imitating Christian methods and ideals which are contrary to the historical teaching of Buddha. It may be a thousand years before historical criticism is honestly applied to Buddhism, as it has been and is being applied to Christianity. But the religion, Christian or Buddhist, that garbles the truth, shall surely perish:

Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,—
The eternal years of God are hers,
But Error, wounded, writhes with pain,
And dies among his worshipers.

X

CONCLUSION

Japanese people are naturally liberal-minded and progressive. This is revealed in their history. When the flow of civilization was from India, in the seventh century, the great Prince Shotoku Taishi, who was naturally closely related to Shinto, opened his heart and mind to the Indian sage and introduced the new learning, making great reforms in religion, politics, economics, and in social and literary culture. Later, when the flow of civilization was from China, the great Hojo Tokimune, to whom is attributed the honor of defeating the Mongolians and saving Japan from an invasion, welcomed to his court the Chinese priest, Sogen Zenji, who introduced the learning of Choohe of the Sung era to Japan. This learning, disseminated by Buddhist priests, soon became the recognized learning of Japan, wielding an influence upon the life of the nation entirely apart from the influence of Buddhism. Again the flow of civilization changed, and one of the greatest of modern rulers, the late Emperor Meiji, took a vow to seek knowledge throughout the whole world, and later granted religious freedom of belief and practice to Japan.

In the early days of Meiji Japanese statesmen sent deputations of various kinds to Western lands to study conditions there. Unfortunately, what impressed them most about Western civilization was not the spiritual forces or the religious life, but rather their military and naval power. They recognized the important place such power was playing in the struggle for supremacy then

going on among the leading nations of Europe. They returned to Japan to introduce the military system of Germany and the naval system of England, as well as Germany's governmental order and a well-organized educational scheme. The materialism of the West was fully appreciated. In science, invention, industry and military power Japan very quickly won a place among the leading nations of the world. Mr. Fukuzawa, founder of Keio University, advocated the adoption of Christianity as the national religion of Japan, but fortunately this suggestion was not accepted, probably due to the fact that Western nations failed to demonstrate much of the real spirit of Christ.

1. *The World Appeal to Buddhists.*

In a recent meeting of The Far-Eastern Buddhist Congress some observations about the Western world were very clearly summed up. The following quotation from the address of Tai Shui, Lord Abbot of the Talin Temple in Hangchow, China, reveals the impression which the Western world is making upon Far-Eastern religious leaders:

The present world is a world of strife, which manifests itself in the form of international wars, racial feuds and class struggles. International wars produce feelings of hatred and the desire for revenge on the part of the defeated nations. Racial feuds bring about dissatisfaction and the armed resistance of the subject and oppressed peoples; while class struggles result in the unrest of the laboring classes. In the face of such troubles, even the imperialist powers, the conquering races and the capitalist classes cannot enjoy a moment's peace, not to speak of the conquered nations, the subject peoples and the sweated classes.

Besides such open strife there are conflicts and

clashes of interests between classes of the same community and even among members of the same family. Such feverish strife, which is going on all over the world, will certainly hasten mankind toward destruction. In addition to this social unrest, there have been natural calamities, which have destroyed portions of the world, in the form of earthquakes, floods, droughts and typhoons.

Who is responsible for all these troubles? To a superficial observer, capitalism and imperialism are the causes of these social troubles, but if we go further into the matter we shall find that the root of all evils lies in the fact that modern European thinkers have interpreted the theories of the evolution of mankind in terms of materialism. They look upon the progress of human society merely from the biological viewpoint.

The ruling passion of modern society is the desire to enrich one's self and one's own kind. This selfish desire has been the underlying cause of all strife, which has been wrongly regarded by modern writers as an incentive to the progress of mankind. People also mistake the material prosperity and military prowess acquired by the Western powers through such internecine strife as the exceptional achievements of modern society. Such wrong notions have naturally encouraged strife, which has been going on with an ever increasing intensity. The result of people's struggle for wealth has been that a few people have become unusually rich, and form a special class in society known as capitalists, while the great majority have been reduced to a status known as the laboring or the proletariat class. The result of the struggle for power among nations has enabled a few countries to become imperialistic powers with great numbers of peoples of other races under their heels as subject or oppressed peoples.

The world is, of course, too ignorant to realize that what is called modern civilization is built upon nothing but the power and wealth which the Europeans have acquired as the result of their struggle for the gratification of sensual desires and animal passions. The difference between the ancient and the modern civilizations lies in the fact that the ancient civilizations were founded on ethical or religious principles. Ancient society either worshiped the God or gods of the Heaven, revered the precepts of the sages, or followed the teachings of the Buddha. Now the principal features of modern civilization are the wealth and power acquired through social or international struggles for the gratification of sensual desires and animal passions. It is not too much to say that modern civilization is a crystalization of man's animal passions and sensual desires.

The world to-day stands in urgent need for some means of salvation, and I think only Buddhism can save the world, because various kinds of remedies have been tried and found wanting. Socialism has been proposed as a means to cure the evils of capitalism, and anarchism as an antidote to Imperialism. Thus far, however, they have failed to effect any cure of the social and international troubles from which the present world is suffering. In order to understand the reason for their failure, one must remember that these "isms" have been worked out by minds which have not been perfectly free from the three basic evils: avarice, hate and lust.

These evils, if unchecked, will always manifest themselves in such crimes as robbery, murder and adultery. Any remedy or means of cure for the present troubled world, worked out by minds which are not yet perfectly free from such evils, will only increase the troubles instead of checking or prevent-

ing them. To use the teachings of ancient sages like Confucius, or the precepts of prophets like Jesus Christ and Mohammed, as a means for curing the trouble of the present world is also inadequate, because the teachings of these ancient worthies have lost their hold on men's minds in the present materialistic world; the religious beliefs of the Christians or Moslems have been shaken and the doctrines of their prophets about the creation, God, etc., have been disproved by the light of the modern scientific discoveries. For the present skeptical world, only Buddhism, with its teaching about the ten virtues as the starting point, and Nirvana and "Perfect Enlightenment" as the ultimate objects, can be an effective remedy for the evils of the present world.

How can Christianity make an appeal to Buddhists, so long as Buddhist leaders think that the people of the Western world are groping in utter darkness, striving for the light? The nations, the people of the nations do not see the light, but live in outer darkness. The whole world is in this dark. Through Buddhism we can bring light into a forlorn world.

This Buddhist leader gave expression to the first great problem Christian thinkers face to-day. It is the problem of so exalting Christ in the life of America and Europe that the people of the East shall be drawn unto him. The world atmosphere has well-nigh killed the vital appeal of individual Christian propagandists to the Eastern nations. Recently the Hon. N. W. Rowell, a Canadian statesman and Christian leader, commenting on church union in Canada, said: "For years it has been felt that the church was not making its reasonable contribution to the social, national and international life of the people. Questions of industry, the relation of capital and labor, and other

¹ *Japan Advertiser*, November 6, 1925.

equally important questions were not being satisfactorily solved; and the estrangement from the church on the part of certain classes of people was not being met. So much time and money was being spent keeping up organizations that it almost seemed as if the organizations were ends in themselves. It was felt that the church of Christ should create a spirit and an atmosphere by which the difficult problems of humanity should be more readily solved." These are words of real weight. Responsibility for the World War, for racial discrimination and prejudice in our laws, social and international, and for immorality in our world relationships must be assumed by Christians who know a higher ideal but lack the faith and courage to attain to it and the spirit to defend it. Christianity in the West must be Christianized if it is to make its strongest appeal to intelligent religious leaders of the Eastern world. When the real spirit of Christ is lifted up in the world's life all men are drawn unto him. Sometimes we seem to be striving to perpetuate our Western organizations instead of spending our energy upon the real end of all missionary life, the exaltation of Jesus Christ.

We must face the fact that the Buddhists of Japan have lost respect for an organized Christianity which has been inadequate to prevent international disasters, and has failed to retain the loyalty and devotion of certain important classes of Western society. If an effective appeal is to be made to Buddhism it must come through a reorganization of the world's Christian forces and through a revival of vital Christianity in the Western world. If it is true that the modern world without the spirit of Christ is a menace to mankind, then the Christian forces in the homelands must demonstrate that they believe what they teach in such a way as to unite their forces against international, inter-class struggle. Petty theological controversy must cease, and the vital spiritual life of Christianity must be reawakened throughout Christendom.

2. *The Individual Appeal to Buddhists.*

Nothing can make a stronger appeal to a Buddhist believer than the humble unselfish appeal of the living Christ in the life and conduct of a Christian believer. This was impressed upon the writer's heart during a recent lecture tour with a converted Shingon priest. This priest was first attracted to Christianity by the earnest devotion of some young Christian laymen engaged in street preaching. One day he chanced to meet one of them at the public bath. The young man offered to wash his back in order to teach him about Christ, and for several days in succession repeated this act of kindness. This disinterested, unselfish loving zeal made a lasting impression which prepared the way for other, later impressions.

One day he heard an address delivered by Dr. DeForest, one of the greatest of modern missionaries in Japan. Dr. DeForest spoke somewhat as follows, using illustrations from Japan and Japanese history: "The one man in Japanese history whom I admire most is Sakura Segoro, who sacrificed himself on the cross in order to save his neighbors and the peasants of over one hundred villages from oppression and cruelty. I admire him because he gave himself for others. That is a great spirit, which leads a man to give his own life for his fellow citizens. Much greater is that spirit which leads men to die for humanity, regardless of race or nation. That spirit is revealed in the cross of Christ and repeated in the lives of his followers."

After referring to David Livingstone and his unselfish devotion to Africa, to Judson and his self-sacrifice for Burma, Dr. DeForest told about a young man, Horace Pitkin, who had been only three years in China when the Boxer Movement broke out. Mr. Pitkin, anticipating trouble, sent his wife and child home to America with instructions that should he lose his life his son was to be educated to take up his work and complete it. The father

gave his life for the Chinese in the Boxer Movement. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). But here, through the love of Christ, was a man who laid down his life for his enemies, and not only this, but left a dying message that his infant son should some day give his life for the same great cause. This made an impression that led that Buddhist priest to seek to know Christ. His story is more interesting than a novel. For years he prayed that some day he might meet Mrs. Pitkin, learn of her son and thank them for what her husband had done for him. That opportunity came when he was invited to visit America a short time ago. He was told that Mr. Pitkin was a graduate of Yale University. He went there to discover where he might meet Mrs. Pitkin. In the great hall, as he waited for an interview with the president, he saw Mr. Pitkin's memorial statue and copied down his life history. Some weeks later he met Mrs. Pitkin and told her about his conversion. He discovered that the son had already entered a medical college, after which he intended to study theology and then go to China to devote his life to his father's work. That converted priest, Mr. Imae, is telling that story with great effect throughout Japan. Everywhere the love of Christ appeals to all classes of people.

Mr. Imae's conversion throws light on the individual appeal of the genuine love of Christ in the heart and conduct of the worker to the non-Christian. Paul said: "The love of Christ constraineth us." It is the only appeal. Argument and debate never, or rarely ever, win men. The love of Christ is the constraining power that overcomes the world. The missionary must love the people he desires to help. He must familiarize himself with the best elements in their history and be able to do as Dr. DeForest did when he used Sakura Sogoro as a point of contact. Illustrations drawn from Western life and customs are not so effective, except that biographical illus-

trations are always attractive, because all men are essentially and mutually sympathetic.

3. *The Distinctive Message of the Two Religions Contrasted.*

We have already tried to show certain differences between Christianity and Buddhism. To appeal to Buddhists one must appreciate not only points of similarity but points of difference. A young man said to me at the close of a lecture: "It does not matter whether I receive peace through the teaching of Mohammed, Buddha, or Christ: they are all the same thing. This is my modern attitude. It is very liberal and free from intolerance." That is very often the attitude of modern men; it may be liberal but it is also shallow. One cannot but admire the picture of John Knox leaning far over the high pulpit and crying: "Give me Scotland or I die." That may have been narrow, but it represented an intensity of conviction without which no appeal is effective. Truly John Knox was as someone has so well said, "A greater man than he would have been had he known more." However, the missionary who expects to appeal to Buddhists must know Buddhism, and must study it very closely and sympathetically.

Both Buddhism and Christianity teach salvation for all men, but their messages are different. There are two great evils in human life. One is suffering; the other is sin and its effects. As we have tried to show, the starting point of S'akyamuni was suffering existence. This is the first of the four fundamental truths of Buddhism, and it colored all his thought of life. The four visions which led him to give up his luxurious parental home were visions of suffering. Seeing the birds devouring the wriggling worms on the newly plowed ground, he sat for hours lost in meditation on suffering existence.

It colored his views of human life. Human life, he felt, is enslaved by fate, by the twelve-linked chain of

causation by which man is destined to be born and reborn in a continuous chain of suffering and transmigration and from which it is almost impossible to escape. In a well-known book by Kenko Hoshi we read that so great is the suffering of this sea of life and death that even the beautiful picture of a mother nursing her child appears sad beyond compare.

Buddhism believes that individuality and the human soul are illusions from which man must escape in order to be saved from suffering. This doctrine is no doubt modified by the Pure Land sects and perhaps even more so by certain of the Nichiren believers. But even Shinran regarded life as a vale of tears. He wrote: "to think of to-morrow is folly; the cherry blossom may be suddenly blown away in the midnight storm." Life at best is a fleeting, empty illusion from which it is the aim of Buddhist salvation to escape. Consequently it is not strange that a Buddhist should define religion as "that which gives peace under all circumstances." When asked about social reform and ethical teaching, one replied: "I am not thinking of ethics or social reform; I am thinking of pure religion." From this reply it is evident that Buddhists do not readily see that religion is inseparably related to ethics on the one hand and to social obligation on the other. Buddhists seek peace as an end in itself, salvation from suffering and anxiety without any moral or social conditions attached.

The logical effect of such a definition of religion upon one's views of society and the home is not very helpful. Kenko Hoshi, in *Tsurezure Gusa*, says: "If you know that the world is full of sorrow, and your heart is bent on deliverance from birth and death, what time have you to serve your lord or regard your home?" The history of Buddhism reveals how real was this teaching and how many noble men in the past forsook society and home, thinking they would thereby obtain blessing. Others, who were not able to face this logical result of the extinction

of the self, rejected Buddhism and sought the Way in Confucian doctrine. Many of the great scholars of the Tokugawa age rejected Buddhism because they could not follow this kind of salvation to its logical conclusion.

Christianity was developed "in the fullness of time" in an entirely different atmosphere. The message of the Old Testament, however, is a message looking to salvation from sin and unrighteousness. Christian salvation is salvation from unrighteousness of thought and conduct. Sin, impurity and dishonesty are evils from which men were ever taught they must be saved if they would enjoy God's presence and blessing. The great prophets proclaimed this teaching. Isaiah says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon." The very humble Shinto believer, purifying his mouth and body before worship, seems to have some intuition of the need of this kind of salvation before entering the place of worship. Jesus expressed it in that beautiful Beatitude: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The Christian starting point, then, is essentially ethical and social. It makes humanity an end and not a means, recognizing as it does the infinite worth of the human soul. It inculcates humility and self-sacrifice in the service of society. Religious service is to be found in the service of the least of men. It is the mission of Christ "to give life and give it more abundantly." Salvation is not merely the seeking of peace as an end in itself. Christ gives peace and joy such as the world cannot give nor take away, but "He comes not to give peace, but a sword." Interpreted in the light of his all-conquering love, this means character; it means conviction; it is the religion of activity. True, the organized church has often seemed more Buddhist than Christian, for it has been other-worldly and has sought peace largely as an end. But Jesus Christ sought rather to bring life,

active service for others and loving devotion to mankind. Humble service, even a cup of cold water given in this spirit, brings its reward.

Here then we are in a position to contrast the fundamental message of salvation of these two religions. The Buddhist still seeks peace and salvation from all suffering. The Christian must seek salvation from unrighteousness, sin, immorality, dishonesty and falsehood. If a man say, "Lord, Lord," and keep not the sayings of Jesus in spirit and in truth, he cannot be called a Christian, however loud his profession. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, *but he that doeth the will of my Father* which is in heaven. Many shall say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and *in thy name done many wonderful works?* And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, *ye that work iniquity*" (Matthew vii. 21-23).

Contrast with this the idea that Amida saves *without condition* all who call upon him, and the moral standard of the two systems becomes clear. In modern society young men are not seeking salvation from suffering. If peace in that sense is the object of religion it is not much wonder that so many claim to have no religion. But our appeal to Buddhists of Japan, based upon these fundamentally different points of emphasis, is to accept Jesus Christ and the Bible, especially the New Testament; to let it be taught publicly to priests and people, with its message of salvation from immorality, impurity and sin. Mere imitation of external organizations and methods is not sufficient. The Christian advocate must urge his hearers to come out boldly and accept Christ, just as Shotoku Taishi in his day accepted Buddha, and Hojo Tokimuni in his day accepted the learning of Chu Hsi, with the result that from the sixth century Buddhism almost absorbed Shinto, and later the Chinese Confucian

scholars almost absorbed all the others, and both made their contribution to Japan and her wonderful civilization.

Is it too much to urge that Japanese religious leaders, without destroying the truth of the past, should accept Jesus Christ and the New Testament message which has power to clean up the Augean stables of organized Buddhism which so many of the best and most cultured Buddhists have already recognized as hopeless. Let the power of the Holy Spirit be breathed into these dry bones that the dry bones may take on new flesh and life. If Buddhists are ready to give up their competitive attitude toward Christ and enter the path of repentance from sin, obedience to the will of God and faith in the power of the Holy Spirit in the heart and life as revealed in the love and power of the cross, then they are ready to unite with Christians in the service of humanity. But the Augean stables must be purified and the evil cast out.

Finally, one difficulty is to be found in the idealism of Buddhist philosophy, in spite of the fact that it is very beautiful, resembling that of Hegel in more ways than one. The more pantheistic sects of Buddhism, assuming that "Human passion is itself enlightenment," that "birth and death are Nirvana," naturally tend to explain away good and evil as illusion. Christianity has no doubt suffered from this form of philosophy in recent years. The so-called New Theology of Rev. R. J. Campbell was a notable instance. It was not his historical criticism that was at fault; it was his philosophy, which he himself afterward rejected. Jesus had no vague attitude toward evil. Evil must be overcome and the evil heart must be purified: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." Men are not governed by "iron fate." Everything must be weighed from the standpoint of holy personality. Mr. Pitkin's death at the hands of the Boxers after only three years of service for China was not merely fate. In the light of character values it becomes an example of the

wonder-working power hidden in the very nature of experience.

4. *The Universal Light in Buddhism.*

Having pointed out these fundamental points of difference between Buddhist and Christian salvation, it is necessary to remember that Buddhism is not without a moral way. She has her ten perfections, her five commandments, her moral teachings. Her moral teaching is the universal moral code of the race. Many of her precepts resemble those of the Old Testament and those of Confucian moralists. Her teachers frequently emphasize "doing no evil," "striving after all good," and interpret these ideas in a modern way. It cannot be denied that they recognize the need of a universal law of morality. Christians should never minimize the importance of this common universal light which is found in Buddhism and Confucianism as well as in Christianity.

It is also significant and encouraging that the value of repentance and confession is recognized by Buddhists, Shintoists and others. In the Zen baptismal ceremony confession plays an important part. Pilgrims in white robes frequently rush through the streets or climb the mountains crying: "Zanki, Zange, Rokkon Shojo" ("Ashamed, penitent I pray that the six sense organs may be pure"). These practices must have arisen out of some sense of sin and need of repentance, although in many cases the modern pilgrim repeats this phrase without really understanding what he is saying or what it signifies.

Older sects offered salvation by one's own effort. Confucianism declares that men must subdue themselves and earnestly seek to practice virtue, on the principle of doing good in the hope of becoming good. This is true of several old Buddhist sects and even of some of the Pure Land sects, which repeat the name of Amida by way of accumulating merit. The True sect, however, empha-

sizes not only salvation by faith, but lays stress on the grace of Amida, the Buddha of "measureless light and life." This bears the closest resemblance to the Christian idea of salvation, but unfortunately it does not emphasize the ethical conditions of salvation. Consequently it fails at a vital point, for no revival of religion which is robbed of ethical value can be permanent and enduring. It must be the truth in the Christian sense that sets men really free.

Japanese Confucianists had a wonderful conception of the righteous spirit. Fujita Toko, when imprisoned by the Shogun, imitating the ancient Chinese T'ien Haiang's ode to the Spirit of Righteousness, sang of this righteous spirit as filling heaven and earth, its purity revealed in the land of the gods, in the peak of Mt. Fuji, in the endless waters of the ocean and in the beautiful cherry blooms, and in the history of Japan in the wisdom of her monarchs; influencing the councillors of state to righteousness; producing the heroes and patriots of Japan, and sustaining Fujita Toko abandoned as prisoner so that neither life nor death could throw him into confusion or doubt. He promised, if he lived, to see moral principles restored; if he died, to become a genius of loyalty from on high, protecting the foundations of the Empire.² This right spirit of Fujita is a good point of contact for the work of the Holy Spirit recognized as working in the hearts of men. The Christian, unlike the Buddhist, lays stress upon being good or the need of new birth. As the starting point of right conduct man must be born of the spirit of righteousness if he would do right.

Many Buddhists feel the lack of this inner spirit of righteousness and holiness. This may be illustrated by two sayings received from two converted Buddhist priests. "It is all right to speak of giving up seeing, hearing and speaking evil, but when it comes to giving up thinking evil, that is beyond human power." Consequently many

² Written from prison in 1809.

who are performing religious ceremonies and forms are not satisfied. Their hearts are as void of living vitality as the ashes in the fire-box of a fire. "As I look at the sleeves of my black vestments, why is it that with a body thus bedecked I should be ashamed of my very shape?" This expresses the lack of ethical and spiritual purification.

This condition is not confined to Buddhists. It is the common experience of the race without the power of the Holy Spirit of God in the heart and life. Paul expressed it in that wonderful seventh chapter of Romans: "but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . . I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Then as he thought it over, he cried from the depths of his soul: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He discovered his reply in the eighth chapter where he entered into the depths of Christian experience and enjoyed the triumph of the Spirit of God in his life.

5. *The New Wine in Old Bottles.*

The "new wine" which has come to Buddhism through her contact with Christianity cannot long remain in the hardened old bottles of organized Buddhism, any more than the new wine of the gospel of Jesus could be put into the old bottles of the organized religion of the Jews or remain in the non-Christian forms, ceremonies and practices adopted by the medieval church during its conflict with the non-Christian religions of the Roman Empire. In Christianity, reformation has followed reformation and will continue to do so, until all of these dead forms are thrown off. So in modern Buddhism, the great difficulty is not with the new wine, but with the old bottles which taint it. Organized Buddhism is "hopelessly degenerate." Only by putting into the "supreme

being" a living, ethical-social connotation and receiving the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of righteousness and truth, can the best elements in the old be awakened, deepened and fulfilled. To do this, modern Buddhists must cease relying upon empty imitation and accept Jesus Christ as the perfect revealer of absolute personality and of man. If Buddhists are led by the spirit of Jesus their ultimate reality will cease to be a mere abstraction of philosophic imagination or an academic term, tainted, alas, by their historic struggle to suppress life and desire, and will become the spirit of the Living Christ who is the Holy Spirit of God the Father.

The day is not far distant when pious Buddhists who are dissatisfied with modern attempts to ape Christianity will open their minds and their temples to the magnetic influence of Jesus and His saving grace. It is possible to think of them uniting to support the followers of Jesus in practical community service. Certainly a radical change in the traditional methods of the divided church must come, if the church militant is to serve the masses of any land. The servants of Christ must adapt their methods to serve the needs of the tenant farmers, the laborers, the citizens and those of the entire community in the broadest and most humanitarian way possible. As Jesus "went about doing good," so must his messengers burn with a sympathetic zeal for the good of those whose background and early training are not Christian.

Japan is apparently passing through a social revolution which calls for statesmanship on the part of all her true patriots. Just as the emperors of ancient Japan welcomed Buddhism, just as the medieval Buddhist priests propagated the learning of the Sung and Ming scholars, so the time is approaching when conscientious and liberal-minded rulers and pious Buddhist priests will understand that it is in the interests of the nation as a whole to study and encourage the teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the "Light of the World," in their temples, and among their

disciples and followers, realizing as they surely will that Jesus comes not to destroy but to perfect the best elements in the past life of the nation.

"Jesus did not regard it as his mission to promulgate a new God or to teach new ideas about God, but rather to summon his fellows to live as God . . . His God and theirs . . . would have them live." In Japan the Christian does not have to introduce a foreign God or a new morality. The astounding evolution of the God idea within Buddhism, the "shining virtue" of the "Heavenly Lord" in Confucianism, and the equally important monotheistic development in Shinto which finds its highest expression in the poems of the late Emperor Meiji, have all prepared the way for the Christian prophet to call upon Buddhists, Confucianists, Shintoists and Christians alike to live as "God, our God and theirs . . . would have them live."

APPENDIX

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